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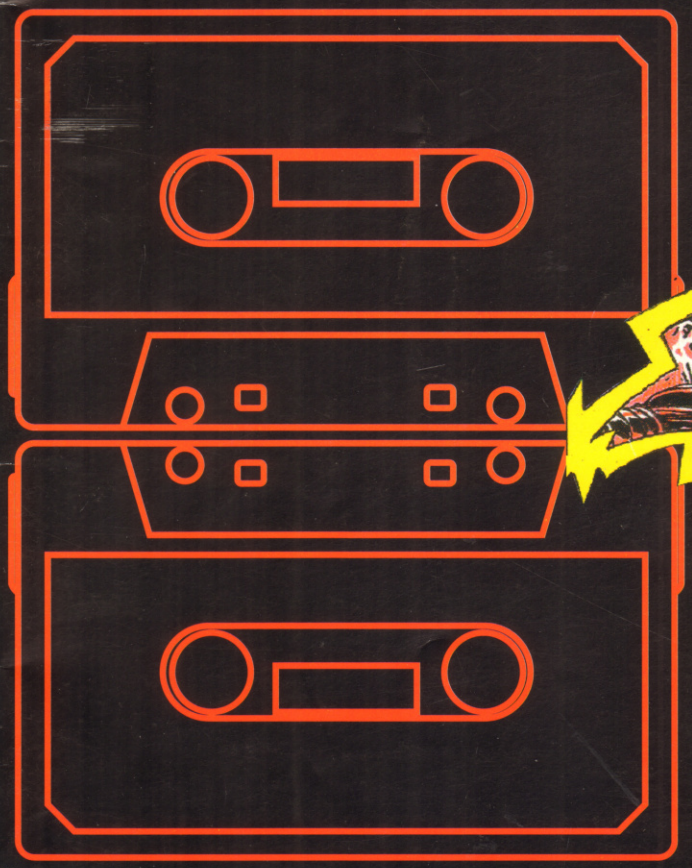

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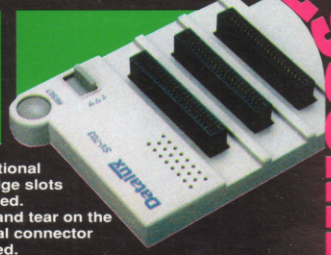

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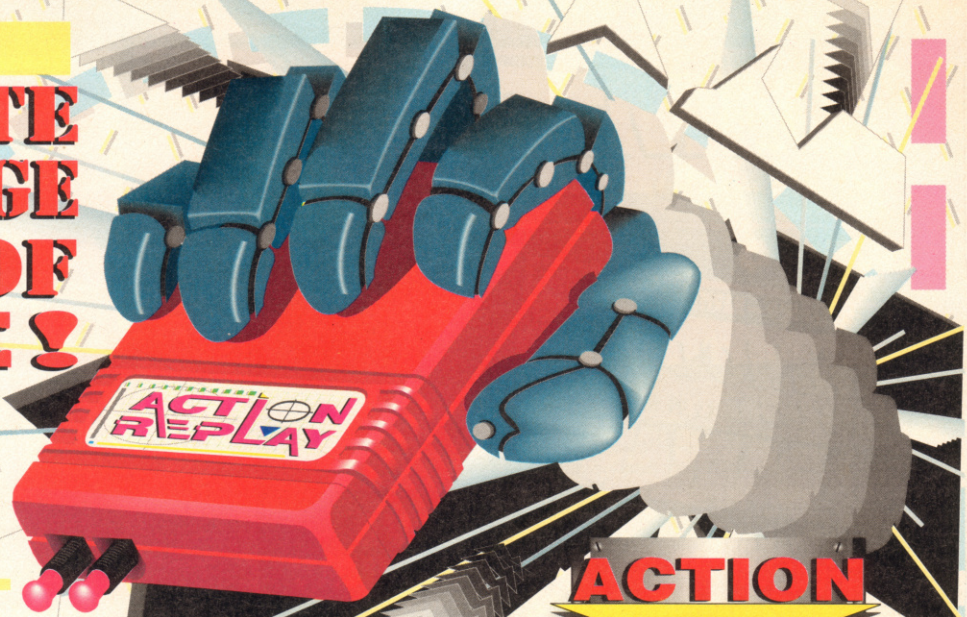

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COMMODORE FORCE

ISSUE 10 OCTOBER 1993

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Soccer, eh? It's *not* a funny old game — when was the last time you laughed? Sheesh...

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SURVEYING THE SCENE — THE SEQUEL!
Who are you? Why do you buy COMMODORE FORCE? Go on — tell us everything...

REEL ACTION

People write to us all the time, saying 'I want to get this 96%-rated game or this great movie licence'. Bearing this in mind, we decided we'd save you endless searching for classics... by *giving* them to you every month. For example, this issue we've got...

BARBARIAN 2
Superb hack-'em-up/arcade adventure with some of the best graphics seen on a '64. It's also one of the only two fighting games to receive a Gold Medal award...

DAN DARE
The cult comic figure's first — and arguably best — C64 appearance. It's a 95%er, by the way...

SEA COMMAND
New Zealand reader Ryan Chenery's superlative home-grown shoot-'em-up.

EASY LIVES
Jon Wells presents another spectacular dose of quality load-'em-and-go hacks.

COMMODORE FORCE

COMMODORE FORCE (incorporating ZZAP!64) is Britain's biggest C64 mag – created by: Impact Magazines(UK) Ltd, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW

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Printed in the UK by BPCC Business Magazines (East Kilbride)
Distributed by COMAG ■ ISSN 0967 476X
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COVER BY Oli Frey

WHAT'S HA

After many glorious issues, ZZAP! 64 — in both its own and incorporated guises — has done the ton. Few magazines, especially computer-related ones, have managed this feat and we're all so proud to be part of it.
Perhaps the best part of this centenary is that it's by no means the end — who knows, maybe we'll get a second letter from the queen! This one seems to have been lost in the post; maybe it'll arrive tomorrow...
You'll also notice the absence of two familiar figures from this issue. Both Steve Shields (our mad, bad Managing Editor) and Ian Osborne have left the magazine to work on other projects. We're sorry to see them go — well, Steve anyway — and wish them the best of luck on SEGA FORCE MEGA/SEGA MASTER FORCE and AMIGA FORCE respectively.
Which brings us, quite neatly, to the fact that there's someone else at the helm for a change. Those expecting a nosedive in quality as a direct result of this are in for a big shock — COMMODORE FORCE will only get better. Take this issue for example; tapes containing 96% and 95%-rated games (and more), an extensive Work In Progress section, pull-out ZZAP! edition... there's so much to crow about it's a shame this column isn't big enough to accommodate it all!
Write to us; tell us what you think. I know it sounds contrived, but it *is* your magazine too — if you're spending hard-earned money (or otherwise) on each issue, you'll want to see things that interest you. The survey included on p59 this issue is a good way to make your feelings known, but hey — we're always here, so drop us a line: even if it's just for a letter-based chat.

Best Wishes

James!

James Price
Acting Editor

COMPLETE MAYHEM!

The Rowland Brother's latest epic — *Mayhem in Monsterland* — is nearing completion. One of the most eagerly-awaited releases of the year, *Mayhem* is a platform extravaganza with some of the best graphics we've ever seen on an 8-bit computer. We've not managed to play it yet, so we can't comment on how enjoyable it is, but the forecast is good. Time for a scenario check...

Mayhem didn't enjoy living in Monsterland. It was always cold, it was always windy and it rained every Sunday. However, rumour had it that Monsterland hadn't always been such an unpleasant place to live. The sun used to shine onto green fields, luscious vegetation and scenic mountains. Then one fateful day, two magical dinosaurs had too much cactus juice to drink and decided to play Truth or Dare. The next morning when everyone awoke, Monsterland resembled a summer day in Milton Keynes.

This, as you'd expect, is where the player steps in. Storyline aside, *Mayhem* is one mean piece of coding. A few of its basic specifications are as follows:

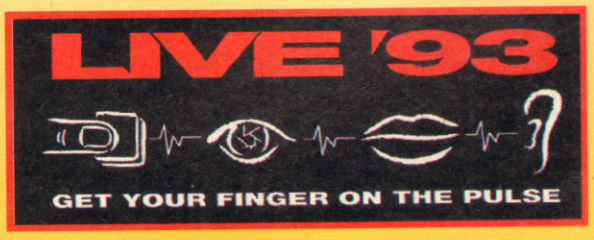
Super-fast, full-screen, bi-directional scrolling — 8 times faster than the *Creatures* scroll.

GET A LIFE!

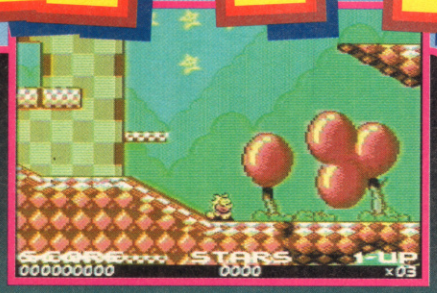
...no, sorry — the heading should read 'get a Live '93 ticket', only that's not as catchy. Seriously though, Live '93 — to be held at London's Olympia from 16 to 20 September — is set to be *the* show of the year. With exhibitors ranging from British Telecom to everyone's favourite software houses, there's a lot to see and do there. Oh, we're attending too! The COMMODORE FORCE team will be there in all their resplendent overworked, underpaid and '64-loving glory. Everything that's happening in the computer and console world will be demonstrated at the event, and — more importantly — there's loads of games to sample and even buy. Computers aren't the only goodies to be featured; audio equipment, satellite TV, keyboards and photography are all making appearances — it's a wonder the organisers have managed to cram so much into Olympia's (impressively large) halls!

Live TV broadcasts will be taking place during the show, as will games challenges (on various formats). Also, advice from Impact Magazines' gurus — the COMMODORE FORCE, SNES FORCE, SEGA FORCE MEGA, AMIGA FORCE and SEGA MASTER FORCE teams — will be on offer to those willing to fight their way through the crowds. Even Phil Collins is attending!

As we stated last month, tickets cost £7 each or £16 for a family of two adults and up to four children. Afternoon tickets (ie from 4pm onwards) will be available for the same categories at £5 and £12 respectively. If you'd like to obtain your ticket before the event, you can phone the Live '93 ticket hotline on 071 373 8141. Believe us — it's worth coming along just to see how we all look in real life! Honestly, we don't look as bad as we do in our caricatures...



APPENING?

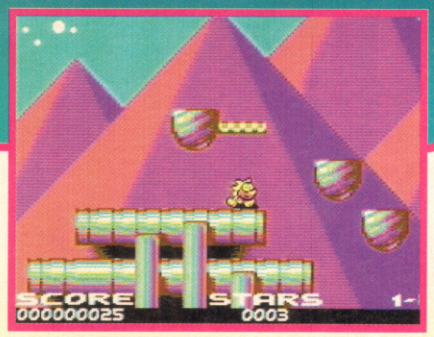


Intelligent monsters with directional attack points.

Interactive music that changes during play.

Non-standard C64 colours on monsters and backdrops

Impressive stuff, eh? Equally amazing is the fact that Apex are releasing it themselves at the highly reasonable price of £8.99 cassette and £9.99 disk. Rest assured, there'll be news aplenty in forthcoming issues. For now, just dribble at those screenshots…



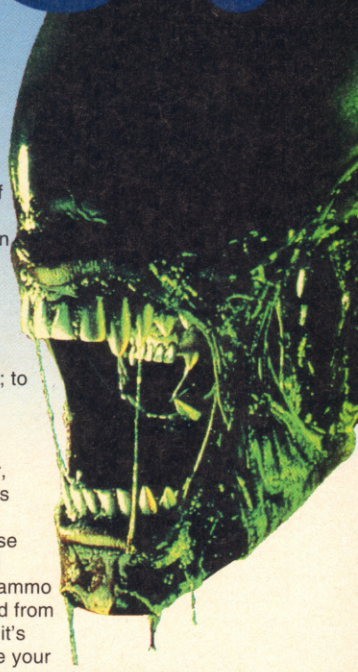
TIGHTEN YOUR BELTS!

Last month we reported the possibility of Alien 3 on the C64. This month, we bring you… a preview!

Of the three *Alien* films, *Alien 3* is considered the lesser of the series by many. Ridley Scott gave us nail-biting suspense in the first, James Cameron (of *The Terminator* fame) gave us action and a tense atmosphere in the second, but the third…

It wasn't so much that it was a bad film, but its predecessors were tough acts to follow, and it suffered accordingly. And that ending — sicky sentimental drivel, if you ask us.

However, Probe's conversion of the popular Mega Drive *Alien 3* game looks to be a particularly impressive shoot/find-'em-up. In the film, Ripley (and the prisoners in the complex) were unarmed. Bearing this in mind, Probe armed Ripley's computerised equivalent to the teeth with weapons. However, this 'minor' example of artistic licence makes *Alien 3* a far more enjoyable game to play. Each level scrolls in eight directions, and, controlling Ripley, there's a set amount of prisoners to rescue within an allocated time limit. Lurking in assorted corridors and areas are the terrifying aliens; to destroy them, either a flamethrower, rocket launcher, gun or grenades can be used. Supplies of these are limited, and although extra ammo can be collected from specific points, it's suicide to waste your best weapons at an early stage of the game.



Already considered as one of the best platform shoot-'em-ups available on the Mega Drive, *Alien 3* looks to repeat this success subsequent to its November C64 release. More information — and screenshots, which arrived just too late to be featured — next month.

WHO'S DOING WHAT?

THE TEAM AND THEIR TRICKS

JAMES PRICE

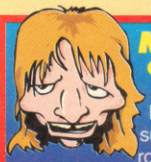
● Despite his rise to power subsequent to Steve's departure, James hasn't let it go to his head. A just and caring person, James immediately delegated the worst jobs to everyone else. 'You get on with that or you're all fired' he enthused, before leaving for the pub. We haven't seen him since.

FAVE GAMES: *Liverpool*

CHRIS HAYWARD

● COMMODORE FORCE's erstwhile Tipster cum Production Editor has been a little strange this month. He'll sit and write for about ten minutes, then let out a huge roar and push everything off Miles' desk onto the floor. Considering his usual laid-back nature, this behaviour is almost worrying…

FAVE GAMES: *Liverpool*



MILES GUTTERY

● Miles has also had a strange month. He'll be sitting quietly, beavering away, when all of a sudden Chris will let out a huge roar and push everything off his desk. Even stranger was an agreement (with his signature at the bottom) found on Chris' desk with 'I promise not to move the Tipster's desk to Bournemouth again' written on it. Strange…

FAVE GAMES: *Liverpool*

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...BUT ISN'T IT TIME YOU DID?

Imagine a world free of hard work, where money is the last thing on people's minds and the only effort humans would make would be to blink. Any activities could be carried out via the anti-gravity chair in which you'd be encased. Special attachments would stretch your legs so cramp wouldn't set in, and a small device would stimulate your heart so exercise could be carried out without effort. The computerised chair would be mind-controlled, so no fingers would have to flex in order for the chair to function. Actually, it wouldn't even be mind-controlled as this, in turn, would be considered strenuous, so the chair would think for itself and tend to your every need. Of course, lack of mental stimulation is the beginning of the end, but there would be one invaluable entertainment system — a C64 strapped to your eyes.

That would mean 100% Commodore gaming; you could play *Creatures* for the first five years of your life, followed by a good ten years on *Turrican*... your entire existence could be devoted to the C64. No school, no work, and the chair would even note down the tape-counter during a multiload.

Alas, this paradise world would have a disastrous side effect — you couldn't make it to the newsagent to buy COMMODORE FORCE!

FREE GIFT

If you take the wise decision to subscribe you'll receive Beau Jolly's *Big Box 2* compilation (RRP £16.95). That's 30 fantastic Commodore games in one bumper bundle! Don't miss out, join today!

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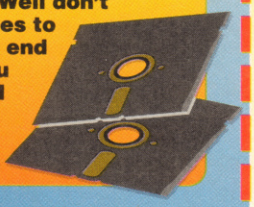
Long to play the Reel Action tapes on your disk drive? Well don't try and get your tapes to run on it 'coz it'll all end in tears. Instead you could subscribe and get Reel Action on disk! Now you can't say fairer than that.



COMMODORE FORCE

I'm a prophet and I realise that COMMODORE FORCE is essential for the survival of the human race. My anti-gravity chair is filling this out for me and I await my first issue along with the *Big Box 2* collection.

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REEL AC

After last months awesome smash — *The Blues Brothers* — you're probably wondering just how we're going to top it. Well worry not mine little trilobites. This issue launches a formidable two-pronged classic attack with one of the original (and best) arcade adventures *and* the incredible *Barbarian 2* — certainly one of the most bloodthirsty games ever to congeal in a C64. Check it out...

BARBARIAN 2

Beau Jolly

PROLOGUE

At the finale of *Barbarian — The Ultimate Warrior*, the barbarian defeated the warriors of Drax and thus freed princess Mariana from his evil spell. Drax fled to the dungeons beneath his black castle, vowing to wreak disaster on the jewelled Kingdom. It is decided that there is only one way to stop Drax. The Barbarian and Mariana — herself an accomplished swordsman — are the only two warriors skilled enough to survive the perilous journey to Drax's lair. They must stop him before it's too late.

CHOICE OF CHARACTER

You may choose to play either the Barbarian or Princess Mariana. At the beginning of the game the two characters will appear. Choose your warrior by moving the joystick left or right and pressing FIRE.

LEVELS

You must fight your way through three levels — the Wastelands, the Caverns, and the Dungeons — before arriving at the fourth level, the inner Sanctum of Drax. These sections must be played in the correct order.

Each of the first three levels is a maze consisting of approx 28 screens. As you view each screen, it is possible to walk left, right, or into doors or caves at the back of the screen.

The direction you are walking, as viewed on a map, is continually changing and therefore a compass (in which a sword always points north) has been provided at the bottom of the screen.

When you reach the exit to the next level Display will pulse as a warning. It is not advisable to leave without first collecting all available magical objects (more about those later).

MONSTERS

On each of the first three levels you must fight six different types of monster, some of which can be killed with one well-placed blow. They are:

The Wastelands: Saurian Beasts, Neanderthal men, Apes, Mutant Chickens, Stabbers, Floaters.

The Caverns: Carnivores, Orc Guards, Crabs, Slithering Things, Cave Trolls, Stingers.

The Dungeon: Pit Things, Dungeon Masters, Giant Grubs, Gobblers, Eyes, Orclets.

If you survive to the Sanctum of Drax, you must face The Living idol, a Great Demon and finally the dreaded Drax.

MAGICAL OBJECTS

In each of the three levels there are two magical objects that you'll need to collect, in order to survive throughout the quest.

The AXE increases your strength.
The GLOBE guards against death from Drax's magic
The POTION increases your resistance
The KEY opens portcullis doors
The SHIELD guards against instant death from the Demon's fire
The JEWEL disables the Living Idol when the idol is reached.

CTION

EASY LIVES

Jon Wells

Free and easy — that's the kind of lives you get with good old Commodore Force. No ties, no responsibilities, just infy ammo, energy and credits whenever you want. This months hassle-free hacks will solve all your problems with:

NODES OF YESOD
TRACER
BIONIC COMMANDO
I-BALL
HOLIDAY COPS
MEGA APOCALYPSE

■ Load up the Easy Lives program then select the game you want to beat with a joystick in port two. Choose hacks by pressing fire then hit space. When instructed, insert the relevant *original game cassette* and press play. Voilá! The game's as good as completed. To return to the main menu at any point just thump RUN/STOP. Also included in the program are music hacks for Star Paws, Black Lamp and Last Ninja. Full instructions are given in the scrolly. Enjoy.

ENERGY AND LIVES

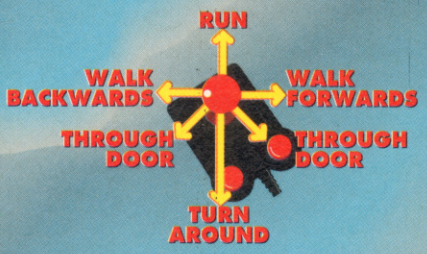
Your energy is displayed as a bar at the top right of the screen. When it runs out you lose a life.

You begin the game with five lives. More lives can be gained throughout the game by collecting any skulls you may find. These contain the life-force of warriors who have preceded you. When you lose all your lives you restart the current level.

The energy of the current monster you are fighting is displayed as a bar at the top left of the screen. When it runs out the monster is destroyed.

CONTROLS

■ WITHOUT FIRE BUTTON PRESSED



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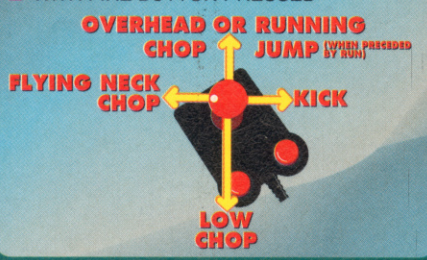

CORKING COVERS!

Your covertapes are probably a might lonely in their boxes, so here's something to keep 'em company.

COMMODORE FORCE

BARBARIAN 2

REEL ACTION #19

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COMMODORE FORCE

SEA COMMAND
SCEPTRE OF BAGHDAD DEMO
DAN DARE
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REEL ACTION #20

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DEALS ON REELS!

If you've invested in a ticket to Loadfast City (ie a disk drive) you'd probably be tickled pink were it possible to obtain your essential Reel Action prescription in disk form. Well guess what — it is! Fill in this coupon and mail it to: Ablex Audio Video Ltd, Harcourt, Halesfield 14, Telford, Shropshire TF7 4QR, enclosing a cheque/PO for £1.49.

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REEL ACTION #19

COMMODORE FORCE

BARBARIAN 2
Superior weapon-wielding epic. Not for the squeamish!

TAPE INFO

BARBARIAN 2 000

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Ease your tape gently into the datasette, calmly depress shift and RUN/STOP simultaneously and press play.

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REEL ACTION #20

COMMODORE FORCE

SEA COMMAND
Hectic water-borne SEUCK action.

SCEPTRE OF BAGHDAD Demo
Jon Wells' revamped arcade adventure.

DAN DARE
Classic puzzle/action with the pilot of the future.

EASY LIVES
Tame those games the easy way.

TAPE INFO

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SCEPTRE ???
DAN DARE 000
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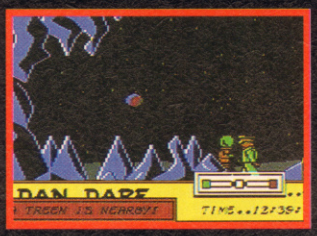
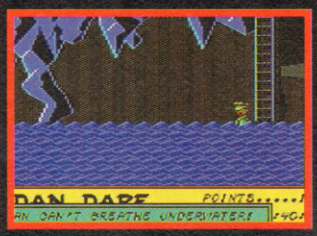
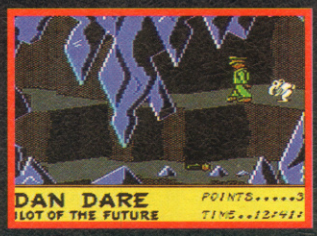
DAN



● Beau Jolly





INTRODUCTION

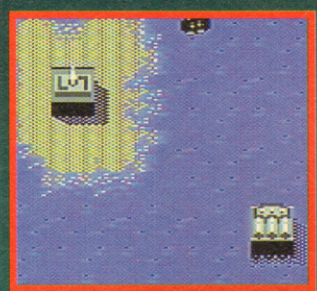
Dan was appearing on 'This Is Your Life'. All his friends were there to speak glowingly of his achievements, but as he moved forward to speak, the screen went blank and then he slowly saw appear the evil green face of the Mekon. An asteroid was heading for Earth; either the powers that be gave in, and announced him as commander of the Universe or Earth was destroyed.

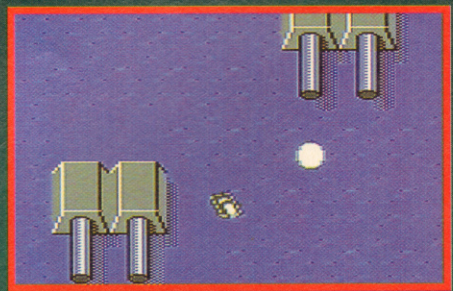
After landing, the team split into two groups — Professor Peabody and Digby went one way, Dan and Stripey, Digby's pet alien the other. After only a couple of minutes, Dan heard a scream, he turned just in time to see a group of Treens carrying off Digby and the Professor. There was no time to lose, they only had half an hour, and now he had to rescue his friends as well as stopping the Mekon's foul plan.

SEA COMMAN

● Ryan Chenery

It seems you people just can't get enough of those wonderful giblets known as SEUCK-'em-ups so here's another to really push the utility to it's limits. There's no boring plot or elaborate story to justify the violence — just a plethora of speedy bad guys and fiendishly-positioned gun emplacements through which to weave your merry way. As suggested by the title, there's something of a watery theme to the proceedings as you choose between a Hovercraft or speedboat to deal your destruction. Each vehicle has its advantages and disadvantages — the speedboat packs more firepower but Mr Hovercraft has the natty ability to move over land just as easily as water. Beware — now and then seemingly impassable barriers present themselves so look out for the messages flashing up indicating

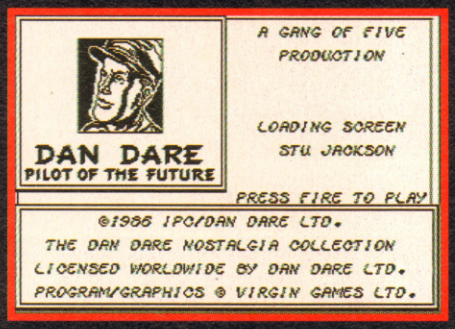




DARE

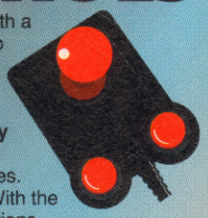
GAMEPLAY

You take the role of Dan. First you must find your way into the asteroid — there are three entrances — and you'll need to find all three in order to rescue your friends and destroy the Mekon. Inside the asteroid there's a maze of ladders and gantries; somewhere on here your friends are held in cells, but also down here is a laser gun. Before you fire this, you need to find and position the reflectors, so that it destroys all three of the computers. This opens up the door of the Mekon's room — he will throw bolts of energy at you. You must dodge these, and destroy him with the grenades. When the Mekon is destroyed, the self destruct sequence will initiate — get back to the surface and escape, but don't forget your faithful companions. The game ends only if Dan's energy is sapped, or he runs out of time, or he successfully escapes with his friends.



CONTROLS

■ Control your ranger with a joystick in port one (fire to change gear) or these delightful keys.



■ **Joystick in port 2 only**
Without the fire button pressed the joystick moves. Dan in the normal way. With the joystick pressed the functions selected depend on the type of caption on the screen.

■ **No caption:**
Back/Up — Throw grenade upwards
Backward — Throw grenade horizontally
Back/Down — Throw grenade downwards
Grenades are used to stun Treens and destroy the Mekon's dome. They can only be used above ground or in the Melons room.

■ **Red caption — A Treen is nearby**
Up — move guard up
Forward — punch up or down depending on the position of Dan's guard
Down — move guard down
P — pauses game.

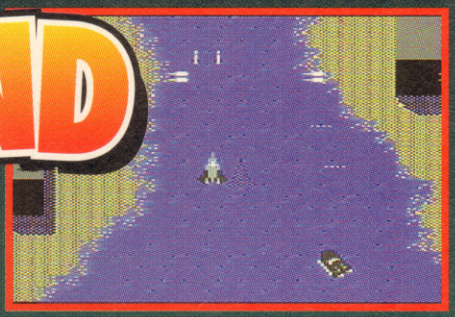
SCEPTRE OF BAGHDAD DEMO

● **Psytronik**

You've read this issue's review, now see what it's like for yourself with no obligation to buy.

The Caliph is controlled by normal joystick directions. When standing over an object pull down to swap it for the item currently in possession or 'use', and fire to launch a magical bolt to dispose of roving nasties. There's only a few locations from the full game, but enough for you to get the flavour of the real thing.

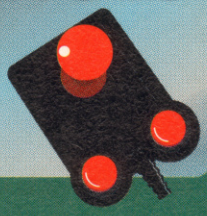
AND



where to hit them. Take advantage of luscious full eight-way directional fire and remember — he who laughs last probably didn't get the joke at all! Two players with two joysticks can play simultaneously. In one player mode plug into port one for a hovering craft and port two for a speedy boat.

CONTROLS

Up .....Forward
Down.....Back
Left .....Guess
Right .....2 out of 2
FIRE .....Fire in the direction you're facing.



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David Burrows

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Nick Tanner

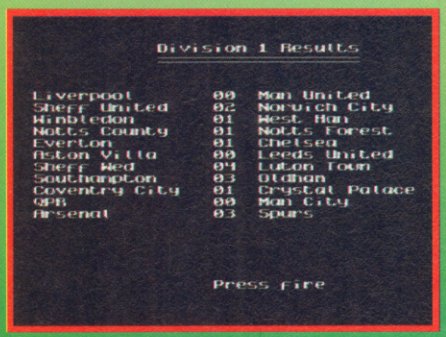
John Barn

LIVERPO

● Grandslam £10.99 Cassette, £14.99 Disk

The passes, the shots... the excruciating fouls. Let's face it, football's a violent old game these days. Shin-pads at the ready, JAMES 'BIG TACKLE' PRICE trots onto the pitch...

● Which shall I wear, the blue or the red? Decisions, decisions. Sod it, I'll stay in!



Writing a review (or indeed, anything) about football is difficult. The clichés trip so effortlessly off the fingers; anything from the traditional 'it's a funny old game, Brian' to Emlyn Hughes 'squeeky' gags. With everyone putting pen to paper or finger to keyboard and using them, it's amazing that no-one's complained. I mean, they're not funny, right? They've been over-used, yes? So why do I, hating them, feel the need to use them in this review? It's so easy; you can close a sentence with them, end the review on a different note — even captions aren't safe. Football games are, by nature, notoriously difficult to describe. In essence, you could bang out paragraph after paragraph of basic text that describe how to play the game — but wouldn't that be boring? Endless lines that basically re-write the game's manual — well, *I* wouldn't read them.

And so, after that initial round of criticism, I've either got to write an amazing literary masterpiece, or make an excuse. Being a coward, I'll choose the latter — as much as I enjoy playing soccer games, I'll admit I hate writing about them.

> **"...Liverpool has that indefinable 'something'..."**

Automatic Promotion

Liverpool was originally previewed back in Issue Three, in which Miles enthused '*Liverpool* looks like being the most absorbing footy fandango yet on the C64'. If by that he meant enjoyable soccer game (I mean, what's a fandango?) then he was totally correct — *Liverpool* just about walks all over every previous game in its genre. The reason for this is simple: speed. Whereas other efforts dawdle along at an adequate pace, Grandslam's offering positively motors. To accommodate this, the screen area is smaller than usual, but the petite scale of the players means there's often a lot on screen at any given time. This is also useful while passing; more often that not, soccer games show little of the pitch (or players), making the inevitable passes to off-screen players sheer acts of faith. Unless you're playing a long ball game, *Liverpool* allows you to make clever crosses and even set-peices with a certain amount of skill. This is party due to the fact that players can 'trap' the ball; once you've learnt the technique, real football (instead of the usual 'hit it and hope' fodder) is possible. Not quite so realistic but equally praiseworthy is the 'aftertouch', where the direction of the ball can be altered subsequent to its kicking. This is useful for through-balls, set-plays, shooting — whatever you feel comfortable with.

Heading the ball is simplicity incarnate. Should the ball be at head-height, a quick stab of the fire button results in an often-useful header. Using this

David Burrows (x2)

Jan Molby

Ian Rush

Barry Vennison

Mike Hopper

John Barnes

Dean Saunders

Mike Marsh

Steve Nicol

Michael Thomas

Ronnie Whelan

Istuan Kozma

Bruce Grobbelaar

OOL

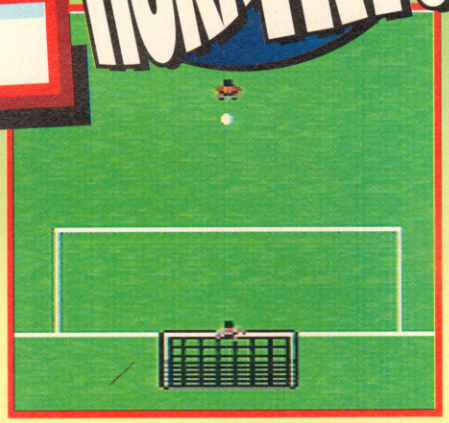
COMMODORE FORCE HURRICANE HIT!

in dead-ball situations (ie corners or throw-ins) can result in the execution of spectacular moves and even goals. Goalkeepers — many a soccer game's weak point — are computer controlled in *Liverpool* and, unusually, their skills aren't too shabby. Rather than keeping to their goal-line, they'll run out to intercept the ball should defenders fail to do their duty.

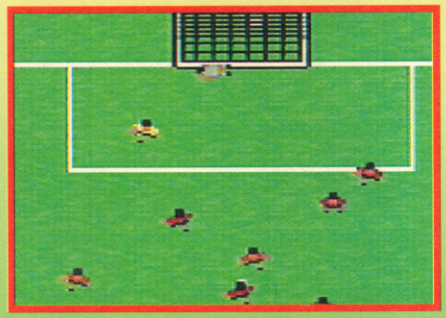
If you're a Liverpool fan, you'll find the team selection section fairly novel. Individual pictures of the team (I'm pretty sure they're digitised) adorn two-thirds of the screen; the other part contains options and information on a selected player.

As a whole, *Liverpool* has that indefinable 'something' that makes the occasional piece of software so special. It's also better in two-player mode — I'm just off to thrash Chris again...

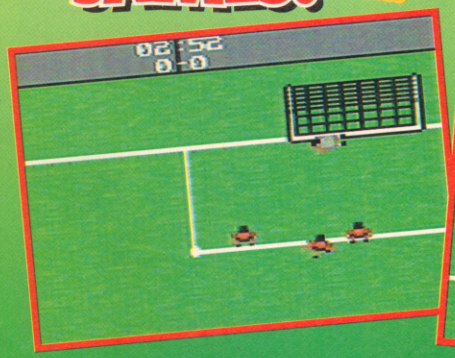
JAMES! 90%

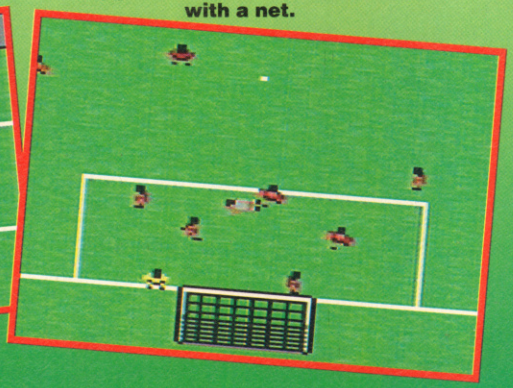


● **The crowd go silent — a penalty to decide the FA cup final. He looks left, he looks right. Talk about tension, crikey.**



● **It's a goal! — You know, that oblong thing you find at the end of footy pitches with a net.**





CHRIS!

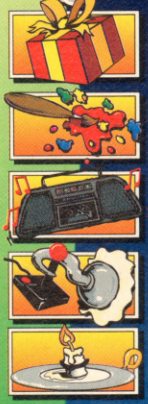
● Having received letters of complaint concerning my *Emlyn Hughes* comment, I was looking forward to *Liverpool* enabling me to rebuild my tarnished reputation. Of course, I could only win back my popularity if it was a good game — no lies in this mag — so I was eager to see exactly how it would turn out.

Whether it's pure coincidence I don't know but *Liverpool* is an excellent football game. Opposing teams are surprisingly intelligent — as are the goal keepers who do their utmost to save a game. You can power off shots at a titanic speed, and the ability to swerve and trap the ball allows for all sorts of plucky tactics and well-planned goals. Forgive me for being sceptical, but I didn't think the C64 could handle such excellence (shame on me).

If you're a football fan you won't find anything better. As for my *Emlyn* comment, compare that game to this and see what I mean — ha!

95%

GALE WARNING



■ PRESENTATION ■ TEAM PICTURES, LEAGUE & CUP COMPETITIONS — 78%

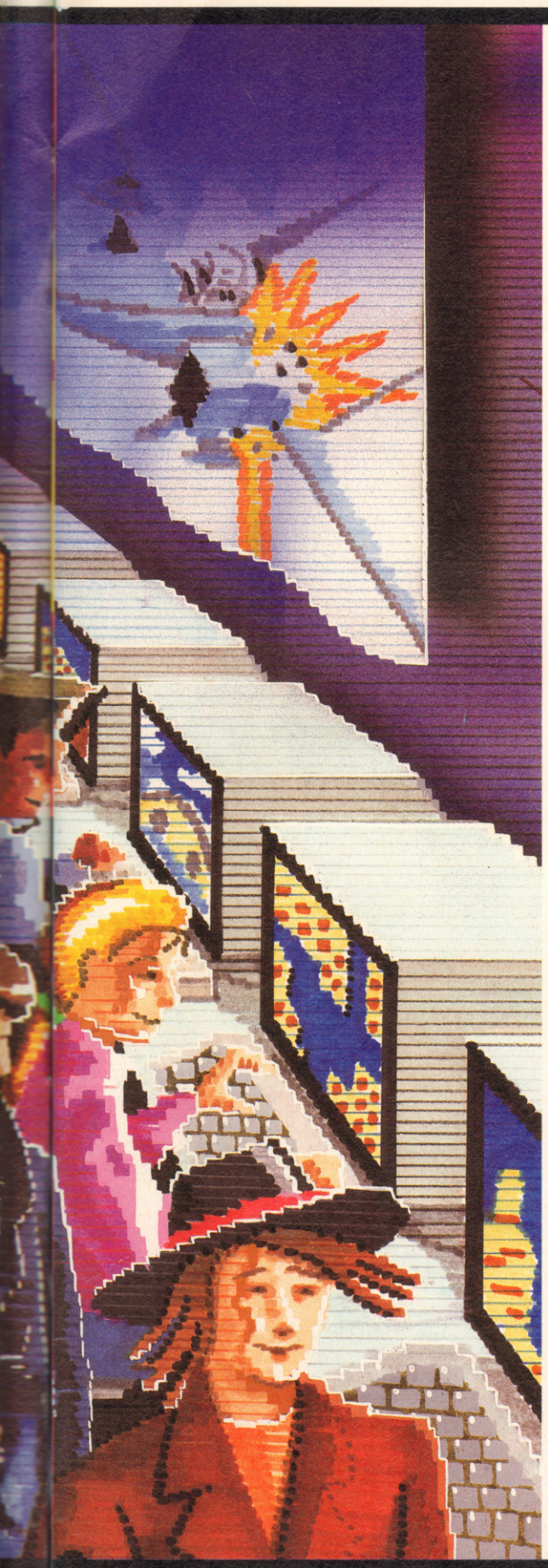
■ GRAPHICS ■ SPRITES ARE BLAND BUT SPEEDY — 72%

■ SOUND ■ THE ODD ROAR AND WHISTLE — 66%

■ HOOKABILITY ■ GRABS YOU BY THE THROAT... — 93%

■ LASTABILITY ■ ...AND WON'T LET YOU GO — 94%

FORCE FACTOR 93%



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CAPTAIN CAVEMAN! I never thought I'd have to wage war on another human being, but Miles Guttery has gone too far. The other day, he moved my part of the office to Bournemouth! There was just me, my desk and an ice cream salesman. It took me five days to get back home as we had to stop at every seaside resort and sell Cornettos. To top it all, my arms fell off! Imagine trying to sell ices when you've got no limbs! There was vanilla here, there and every flaming where — except in the cones. In the end, I was used as a prop outside the van with a sign reading 'Punch the Tipster's teeth, 10p a go'. No wonder I dislike holidays...

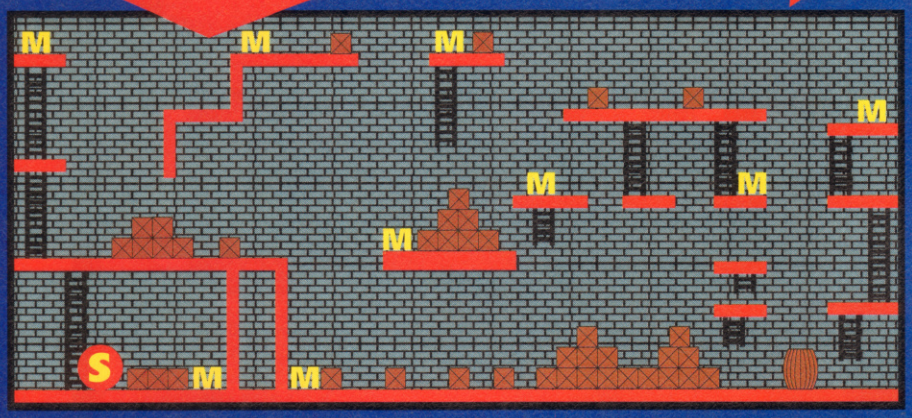
THE TIPSTER!

The Hit Squad

In the navy... la la la la la la larr — I've always despised that song. Luckily this game's much better and **A Dann** from **Winscombe** reckons his maps are flippin' ace. I believe you're correct in your observations, Mr Dann, and I'm going to send you a mystery prize for all the work you've put in.

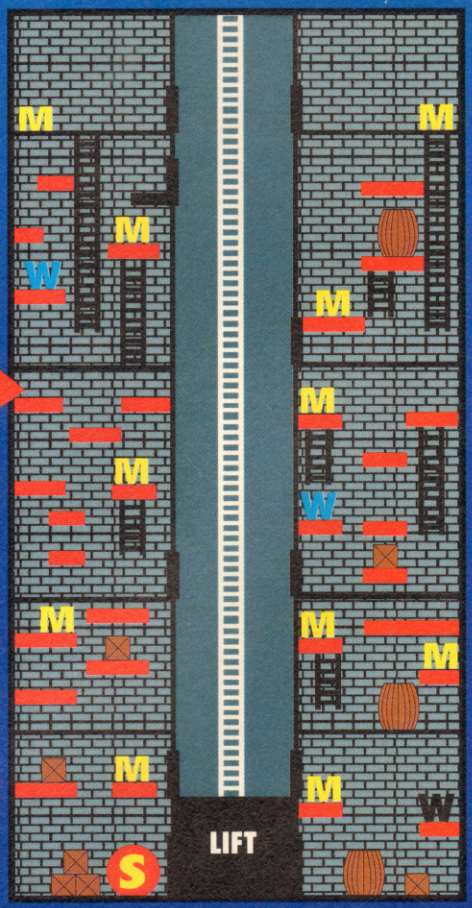
Level One

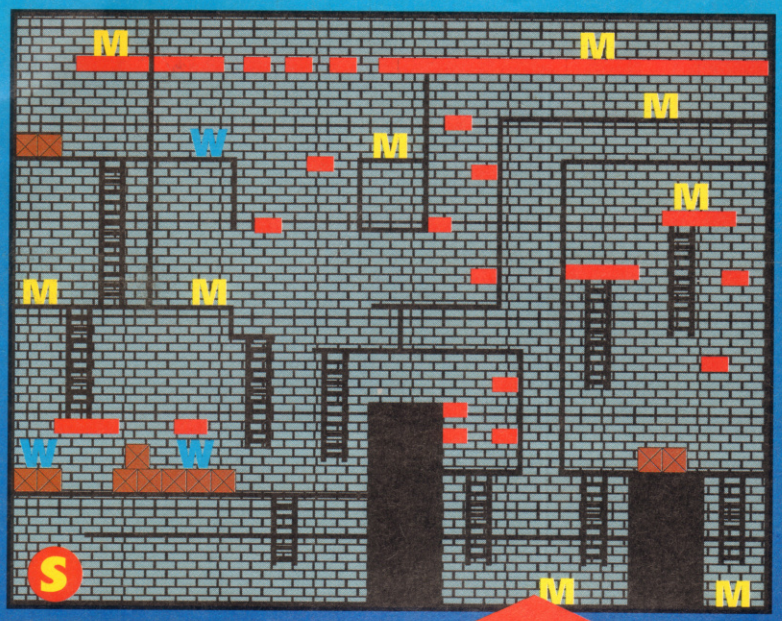
This is rather easy, just take it slow. Silly mistakes lead to energy loss, so be careful.



Level Two

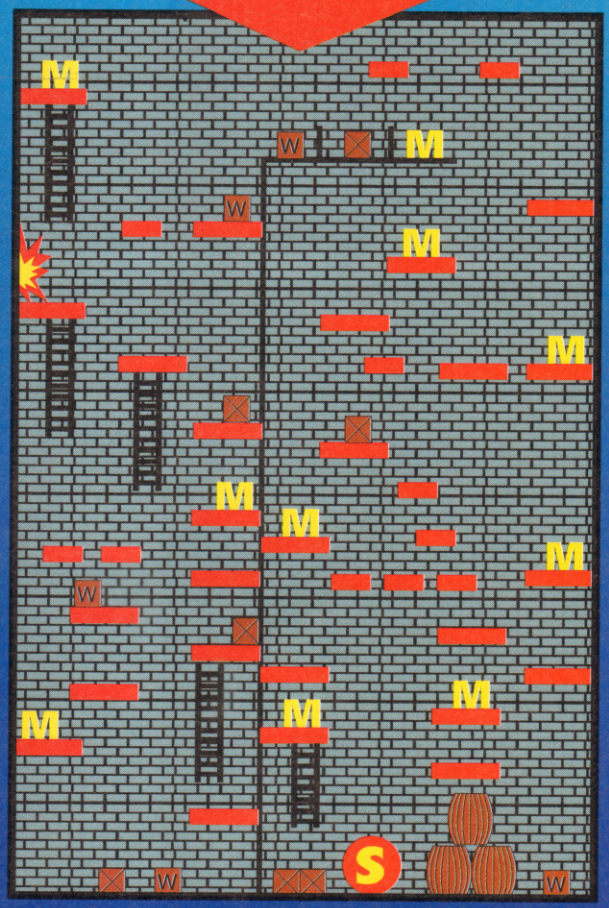
Go up the left-hand ladder first but don't climb down the lift shaft. Wait for the lift and use it to go down to the bottom. Quickly go to the right to finish.





Level Four

The safest and easiest way to kill the enemy at position A is to collect the rocket launcher from a weapons crate. You may have to detonate the stinger last.



ICONS

MISSILE: Defuse them all on each level.

START: There's no turning back now — so get going.

LADDER: Use these to get about safely.

WEAPONS: Handy collectable weapons.

BARREL: This can be picked up and thrown about.

CRATE: Like barrels, crates can be thrown.

WEAPONS CRATE: Shoot these crates for power-ups.

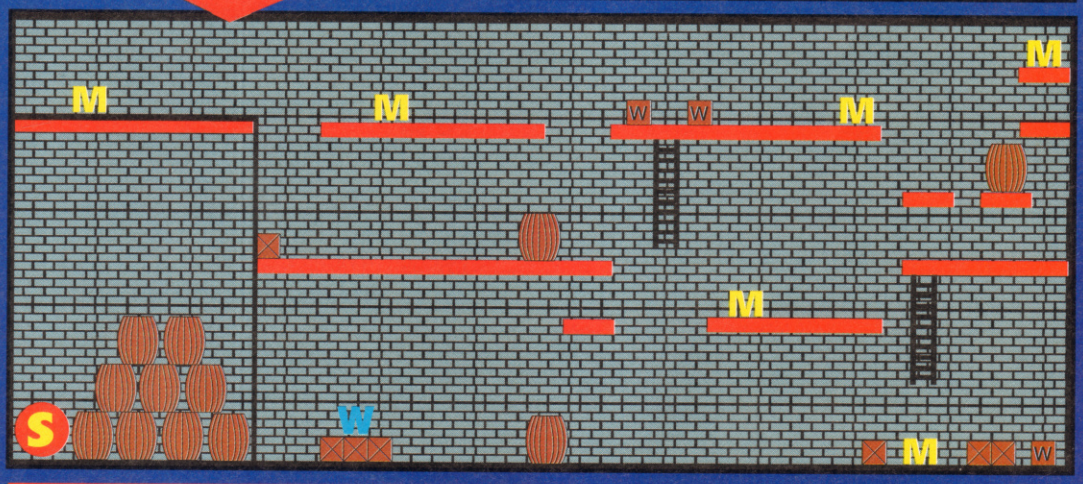
MINES: Avoid these or pay the price — with your life!

Level Three

Plant detonators on the left of the map first, then in the middle/right. Finish at the bottom right. Crates and barrels can be thrown, so pick them up when you're out of ammo.

Level Five

Go along the bottom of the level and work your way to the top, finishing at position A.If you're trapped and near a crate, shoot it. More often than not it'll contain a handy power-up. If there's any Arabs about, jump on them.



Level Six

No map for this level as it's a basic run-and-shoot stage. The only problems come in the form of enemies overhead and enemies that are kneeling. You can't kill the ones overhead but those on the ground must be shot immediately. Another tip — keep ducking!

THE CHEAT

Get yourself a high score and tap in BRAINDEAD on the score table. Begin play and pause the game by pressing F1. Unpause it and you can now skip levels by pressing the left arrow key. Also type in MAD CYRIL to begin on level four.

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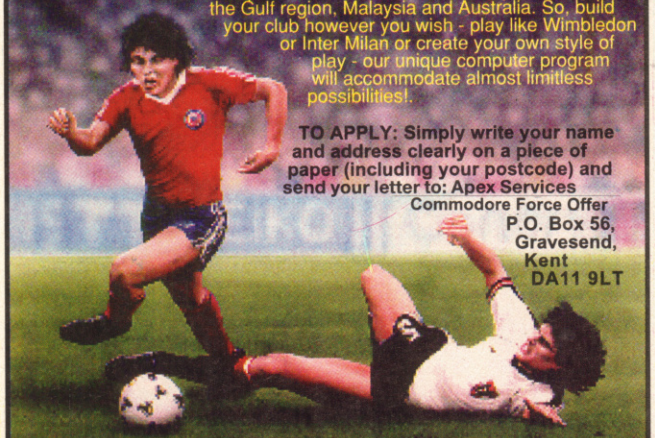

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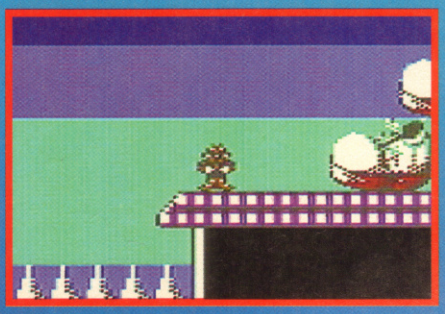
ROBOCOD

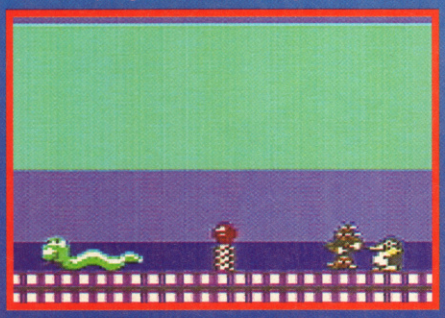
● Kixx

It earned a respectable 79% in Issue Eight but although it's cute, it ain't easy. Fortunately you can help out Pond if you use this three level guide.

Level One

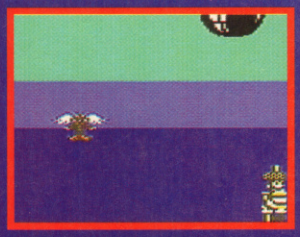


Part One: Go left and collect the energy before running right. Clear the spikes and expand to pull yourself along the roof to get past the others. Get on the lift and leap over the snake and headbutt the first, second and fourth blocks. Use the lift to get past the spikes and nip along the bridge. Collect the items from the small blocks but not the large ones. Stand on the second large block and jump up/right into the wall for an extra life. Fall down and collect the penguins before walking into the pole.



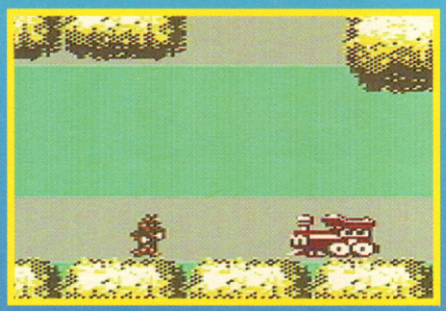
Part Two: Head left, stand on the highest purple bowling ball and jump for an extra life. Go right, hit the small blocks and avoid the liquorice baddies and nab the energy. Cross the clouds to avoid the spikes and at the end, hit the block to be flung to the bowling bowl where a penguin awaits collection. Fall down, and walk into the pole.

Run right to reach the weights and jump on them and up to get through the above gap. Headbutt the large block to the right and climb into the plane. Fly left and nudge the third block for a bonus. Fly around back to the door, collect the penguins and go right to the pole.



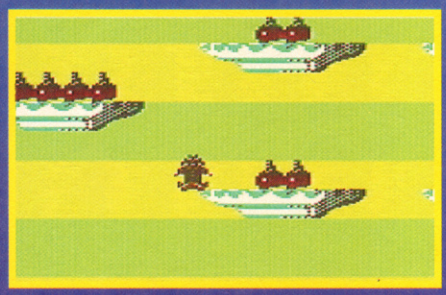
The next stage is a bonus level and it's easy — just collect the objects and sprint for the pole.

Level Two



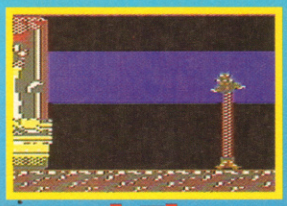
Part One: Walk to the pyramid and climb up. Head left through the large blocks and pick up the energy. Exit the pyramid and when you're out, stand between it and the wall. Expand to climb up some blocks. Fall from the furthest block and go right, jumping down the nearest hole. Keep jumping down the holes and go right. Collect what there is and exit.

Part Two: Go right, jump the holes and snakes and stand by the wall. Expand to reach the roof. Fall off to the left and get the energy. Next, proceed right and leap over the hole, fall down the wall, leap the hole and continue right to exit.



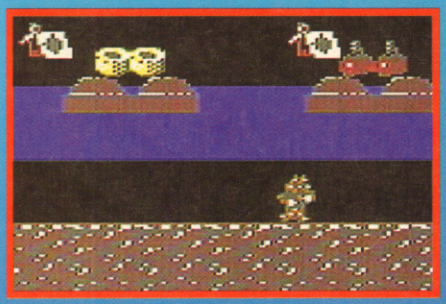
Part Three: Go right to a wall and jump up through the roof. Then go right, fall down the wall, right and leap through three roofs. Fall to the right, to reach another wall. Jump another three roofs, continue right and fall down by another wall. Avoid the cannon fire and keep heading right.

Part Four: Another easy bonus level, just collect everything in sight. Of course, you can do yourself some damage but only if you're a real duffer.

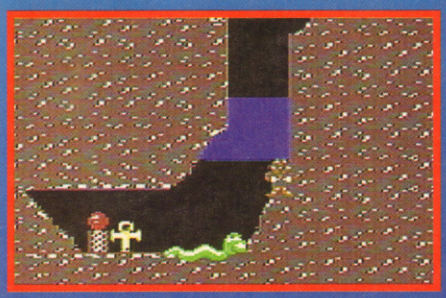


Part Five: This bonus level is just as easy as all the others and as long as you avoid the few hazards, you can't go wrong.

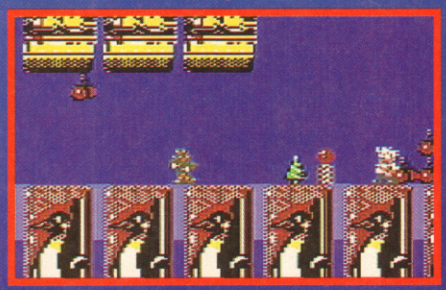
Level Three



Part 1: Go right, jump the spikes and get the objects. To get past the spikes stand on the chocolate. Follow the passage right and bounce over the spikes, making sure you jump off at the end to reach the corridor below. There's a penguin here, so collect it for a limited amount of invincibility. Don't walk onto the exit pole. Instead, wait for the liquorice to appear and stand on it. This takes you to the top of the level and an extra life. Go right and when there's a choice of directions go down.



Part Two: Walk right and enter the right side of the last cake — a nifty pair of wings are up for grabs. Fly up through the gap on the left. Then, fly right to find some energy. When you reach the top of the roof, collect the penguins and exit.



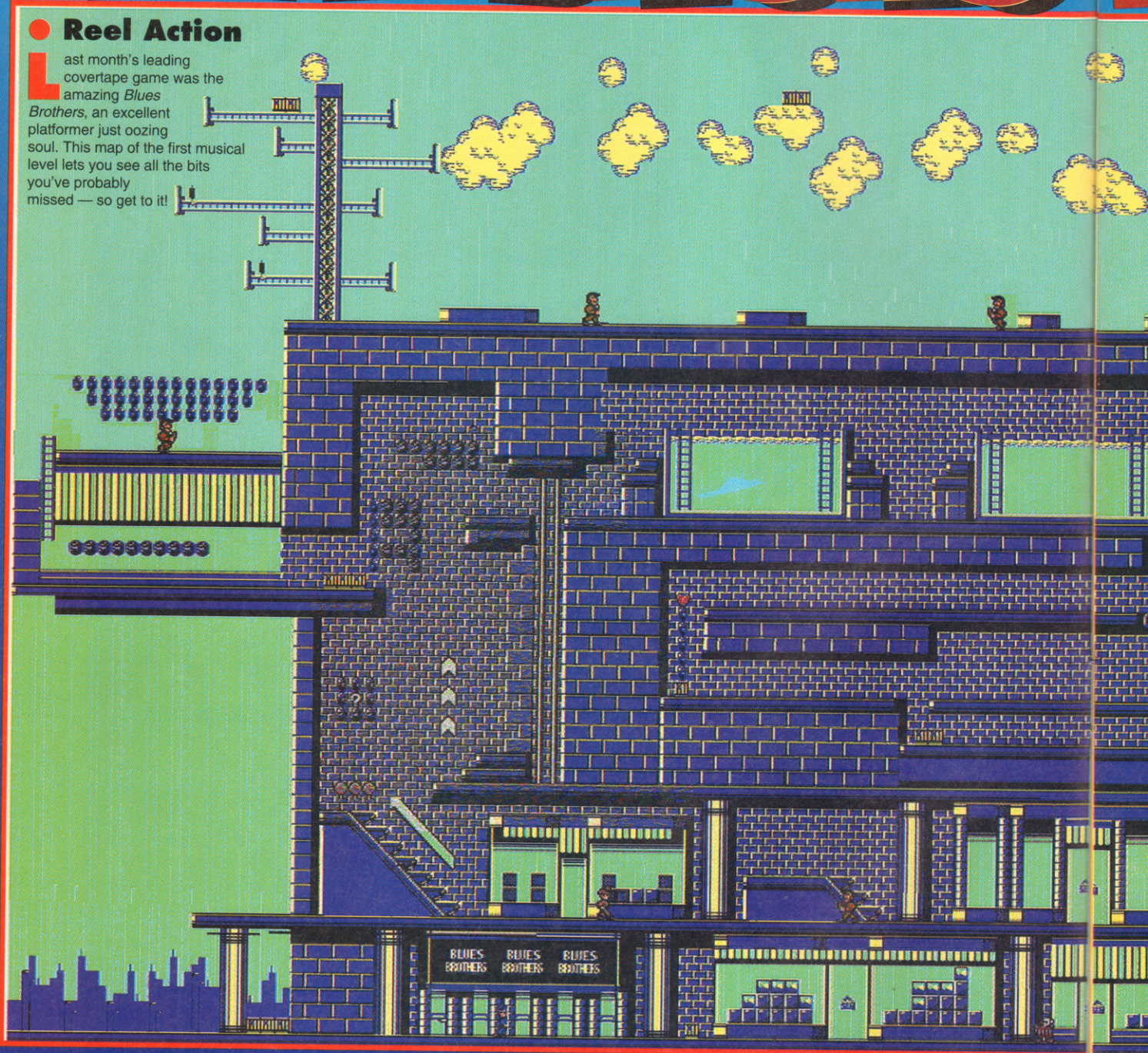
Part Three: Go right avoiding every pole, fall to the right of the end penguin and exit.

Part Four: If you're low on points now is your chance to make your score healthier. Collect the fruits and other gifts whilst avoiding the nasties.

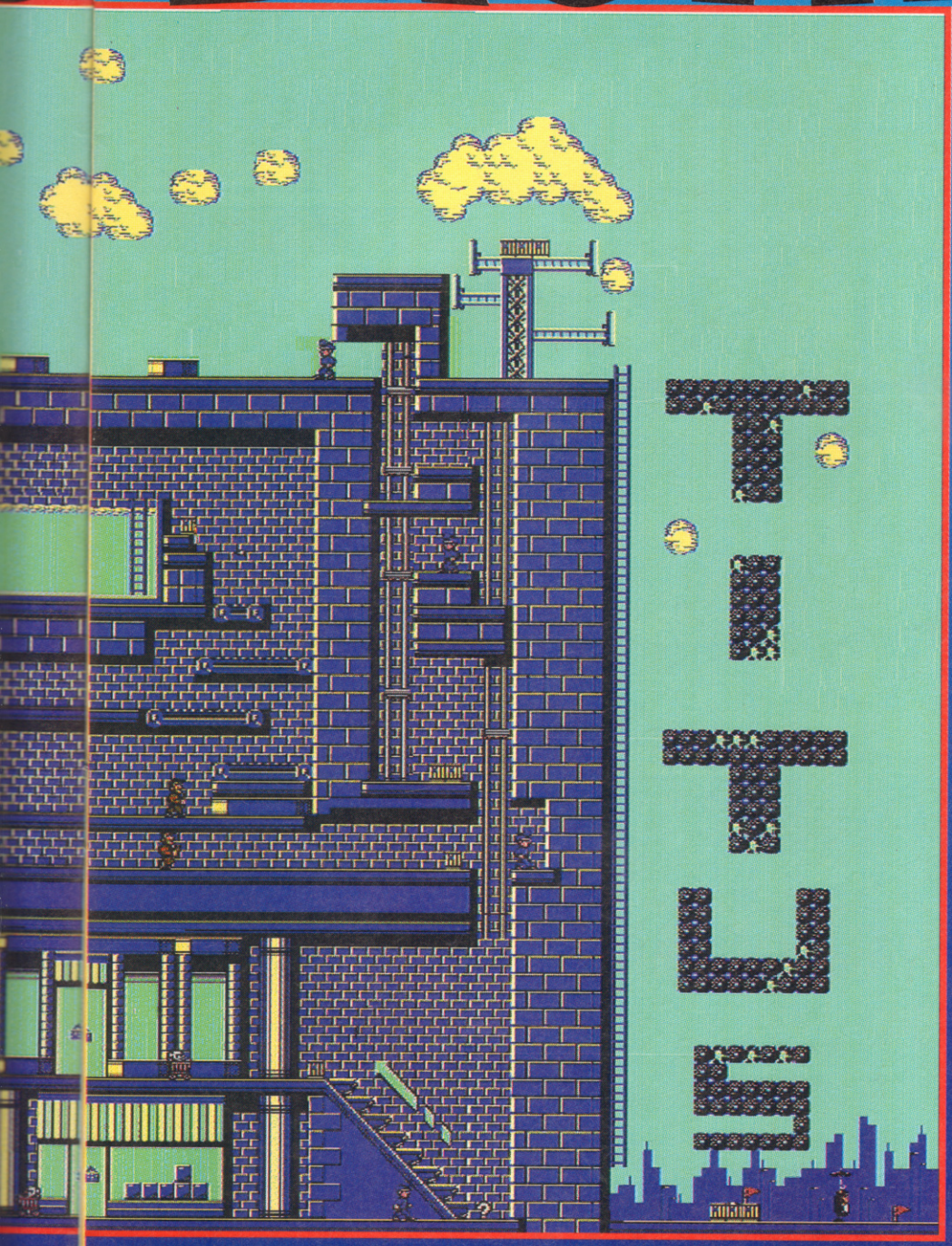
THE BLUES

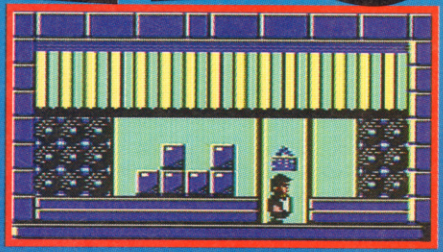
Reel Action

Last month's leading covertape game was the amazing *Blues Brothers*, an excellent platformer just oozing soul. This map of the first musical level lets you see all the bits you've probably missed — so get to it!

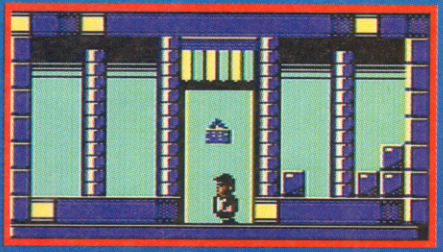


S BROTHERS

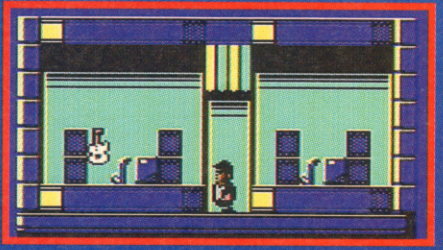




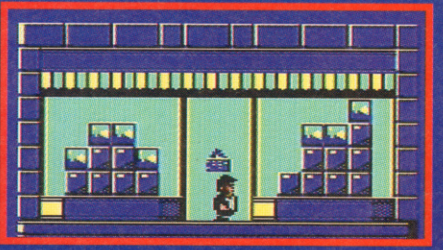
● Along the way, you can nip into four shops that line the street front. Usually they're full of coins which will tot up your score and can also provide extra lifes.



● Not all the shops contain collectable coins, though — in fact, this one's completely bare. Just hide in it to avoid any baddies outside.



● Here's what you're searching for — the elusive musical instrument. The guitar is the key to escaping this level and you can't leave without it — so don't!



● It's full of TVs but you can't collect any of them — there aren't even any coins! Fortunately, this shop provides a perfect place to take a quick breather.

Even though he can't write and he's the worst person to talk his way into being a winner, **Stephen Hawker** from **Leicester** wins this month's Action Replay cart because of the excellent cheat cassette he sent. Well done, Stephen.

SKULL AND CROSSBONES

The Hit Squad

Walk the plank, drink rum and get yourself a big cutlass. Nah, don't bother, you'll probably sprain your ankle. Alternatively, play this pirate hack-'em-up which, although I'd have my stomach removed before playing, does pass the time.

Unless you want to be dead as a parrot, the only way to survive is to pick up food so don't casually ignore any — it all counts.

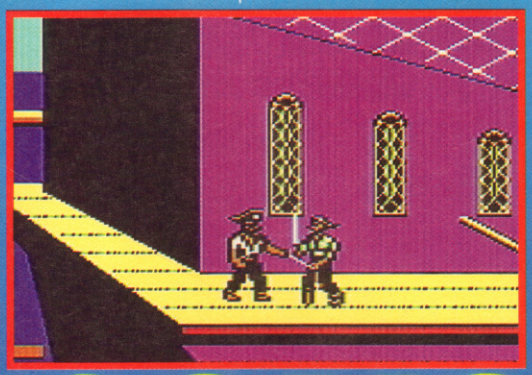
Instead of lunging at opponents, jab up and down as it's quicker.

The lunge does come in handy in long range attacks, especially against the end-of-level henchmen.

The small green bottles are worth ten health points, grapes are worth five health points, the beer three and ham joints are worth one. With this in mind, collect the green bottles first before they disappear.

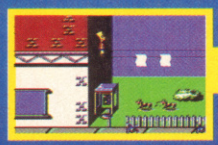
When fighting in two player mode, you'll inevitably be involved in a duel. At the end of the fight the winner is awarded an extra life but neither will get one if the duel is drawn. If it's going to be a draw, it makes sense for one player to sacrifice a life otherwise nobody can get the bonus.

When fighting the Medusa face away from her. Get close (still with your back turned) and use the backslash technique.



THE SIMPSONS

The Hit Squad



And with a mighty thwomp, a cassette did land in front of me. Containing more than eighty pokes? Surely not? But Stephen Hawker did compile such a huge collection and here's one for the *The Simpsons*, a game that many of you want to cheat on, shame shame.

```
0 REM THE SIMPSONS
1 FOR X=258 TO 444: READ Y: C=C+Y: POKE X, Y: NEXT
2 IF C< >19203 THEN PRINT "DATA ERROR": END
3 POKE 157,128: SYS 258
10 DATA 032, 086, 245, 169, 019, 141, 227, 002
11 DATA 169, 001, 141, 228, 002, 096, 072, 077
12 DATA 080, 169, 076, 141, 060, 009, 169, 035
13 DATA 141, 061, 009, 238, 062, 009, 076, 000
14 DATA 008, 169, 032, 133, 001, 162, 017, 189
15 DATA 072, 001, 157, 202, 006, 202, 138, 208
16 DATA 246, 162, 099, 189, 089, 001, 157, 255
17 DATA 221, 202, 138, 208, 246, 169, 203, 141
18 DATA 004, 004, 169, 006, 141, 005, 004, 169
19 DATA 032, 133, 001, 032, 000, 222, 108, 002
20 DATA 000, 169, 000, 162, 173, 160, 004, 096
21 DATA 173, 208, 024, 201, 001, 240, 028, 201
22 DATA 133, 240, 040, 201, 024, 240, 052, 201
23 DATA 160, 240, 064, 032, 213, 006, 141, 118
24 DATA 036, 142, 027, 012, 142, 032, 002, 140
25 DATA 058, 035, 096, 032, 213, 006, 141, 208
26 DATA 024, 142, 198, 012, 142, 193, 033, 140
27 DATA 001, 009, 096, 032, 213, 006, 141, 041
28 DATA 036, 142, 048, 012, 142, 193, 033, 140
29 DATA 237, 034, 096, 032, 213, 006, 141, 209
30 DATA 036, 142, 047, 012, 142, 045, 034, 140
31 DATA 089, 035, 096, 032, 213, 006, 141, 249
32 DATA 036, 142, 065, 012, 142, 086, 034, 140
33 DATA 128, 035, 096
```

HALL OF FAME

Nobody likes disappointment and there's no bigger misery than sending work in but never seeing it in print. So to cheer up all those whose stuff hasn't been used, I like to give 'em a little mention.

Kevin Doyle (Nottingham), David 'complex' Gear (Ireland), Paul O' Brien (Ireland), Bill Burke (Ireland), Kevin Doyle (Nottingham), J Button (Suffolk), Kevin Davis (Somewhere), John Crompton (Wigan), Stephane Hong-lin (Indian Ocean), John Crotty (Ireland), John Randle (Coventry).

Miles may think he's going to take over, but I'm secretly plotting his demise. In fact, I've planted enough incendiary devices by his chair to blow the Knox off any Fort. As they say in many a movie, I shall not rest until Miles is gone — Miles is a film star, ya know? Anyway, lets not stray from the subject; tips — get 'em, post 'em, and I'll remain sane. This is the recommended address: The Tipster! COMMODORE FORCE, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW. Who's that? Oh, it's you Miles. What do you mean I'm sitting on your chair? Oh my...

JAMESY AND SMILES

JAMESY: [singing] 'It's that time of day…'
SMILES: [continues] 'All we do is play and play'
JAMESY: [again…] 'Will someone put that pram away…'
SMILES: Ahhh, happy days. Speaking of which, what have you been up to, mate?
JAMESY: Well, I've been eating those little berries that you find at the bottom of the garden. My mother always used to say 'Jamsey, don't you go eating those berries — you'll get ill'. But you know, mate, I always doubted her…
SMILES: So that's why you've been in intensive care for the past month then, mate?
JAMESY: It certainly is. What have you been doing, Smiles?
SMILES: Well I've been meating people.
JAMESY: Don't you mean 'meeting' people?
SMILES: No, I mean 'meating' people. I've been sneaking up behind them with a huge steak, then… whammo!
JAMESY: Errm… that's great, mate [Lapses into silence].
SMILES: This may sound like a stupid question, but… gnug flam bwit howzer?
JAMESY: You're right. Oh well, time for the end-of-show song…
SMILES: [singing] The was an old man, whose name was Prim…
JAMESY: …And some swine threw a tomato at him.
SMILES: Now tomatoes are soft, and shouldn't break the skin…
JAMESY: But this one did, 'cause it came in a tin.
SMILES: See you next month!

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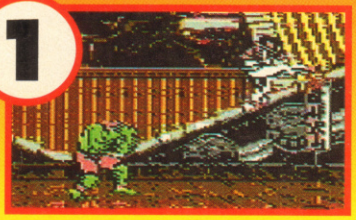
CHART CHATTER

1 STREET FIGHTER 2



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JAMESY: Throwing tins indeed! What a great so… WHAMMO!
SMILES: [chortling] Nice to 'meat' you, Jamesy! Ho ho ho…

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THE MIGHTY BRIAN!

As I was working in the bowels of the building, playing my music as loud as I liked and occasionally nipping upstairs to nick the ribbons off Lloyd Mangram's precious typewriter, I felt a warm glow. Why? Because of the letters of praise you readers in Problem Land have been sending (sniff). It's almost enough to make a techie god break down and... sob!

TAKING TIME OUT

Dear Brian,

1) Is there a routine that will create a time delay in a program?

2) How can I program the function keys to execute a command or print a string?

Wayne Skinner, Melksham Wiltshire

● *Let's start at the beginning shall we?*

1) Refer to COMMODORE FORCE Issue Nine for an explanation on how to use TIME$ for a delay. TIME$ is the internal clock, placed into a string ready to be printed or checked.

2) The following program will help you with this problem.

Enter it and then RUN it...

```
10 RESTORE
20 PRINT "SETTING UP": P=49152
30 READ A: IF A≤999 THEN POKE P,A:
P=P+1: GOTO 30
40 A=O: PRINT "DEFINITIONS. . .":
P=49248
50 FOR K=O TO 127: POKE P+K, O:
NEXT
60 FOR J=O to 7: READ A$
70 PRINT"F";J+1; " : "; A$
80 FOR K=1 TO LEN (A$)
90 A=ASC (MID$ (A$,K,1))
100 IFA=42 THEN A=13
110 IFA=39 THEN A=34
120 IFA=47 THEN A=44
130 POKE P+J*16+K-1, A
140 NEXT K
150 NEXT J
160 SYS 49152: END
200 DATA 120, 169, 13, 141, 20, 3,
169, 192
210 DATA 141, 21, 3, 88, 96, 169, 192,
72
220 DATA 169, 26, 72, 8, 72, 72, 72, 76
230 DATA 49, 234, 165, 198, 205, 255,
207, 208
240 DATA 3, 76, 188, 254, 170, 189,
118, 2
250 DATA 160, 0, 217, 80, 192, 240, 8, 200
260 DATA 192, 8, 208, 246, 76, 188, 254, 152
270 DATA 10, 10, 10, 10, 168, 185, 96, 192
280 DATA 240, 9, 157, 118, 2, 200, 232, 224
290 DATA 10, 208, 242, 134, 198, 76, 188, 254
300 DATA 133, 137, 134, 138, 135, 139, 136, 140
310 DATA 999
400 REM "DEFINE KEYS HERE"
410 DATA RUN*, LIST*, LOAD' ,SAVE'
420 DATA LOAD'$'/8, GOTO, GOSUB, DATA
```

Now the DATA you have to use is a little strange, to avoid using quotes and certain characters that can't be part of the DATA lines.

Lines 100 to 120 inclusive change them into their correct codes like this:

** Becomes CHR$(13), the code for the RETURN key.*

' (Shift and 7) becomes a quote mark (shift and 2)

/ Becomes a comma.

When the program is RUN, the routine that

QUICK QUESTION

Dear Brian,

Can I use a Binatone Computer Data Recorder from my old MSX with my C64? It has a plug that connects to my '64's audio port, but how do I access it via my C64?

Michael Clark, Thornton, Bradford.

● *Michael, get that plug out of your radio socket NOW! The audio socket was* not *designed for a tape recorder — it merely passes out audio and video signals for a monitor, or accepts input from specially-designed hardware. Your MSX (Mighty Strange Experiment?) will not work with the '64. Why not try a Turbo Datacorder, available from the Forcefield Plaza?*

Brian

THE RETURN OF THE MAN FROM ZOETERMEER!

Dear Professor,

As the C65 project ***(completely compatible '64 with three 1/2 disks and improved graphics, plus more memory — Brian's Archives)*** was scrapped, we should do something to create an upgraded turbo '64. Do-It-Yourself schemes have already been covered in German magazines, but not any English ones.

I want to take to chance to give you a brain-teaser which could enable the '64 to go faster than the Amiga 500. A G65SC802 central processor is compatible with the 6510 used in the C64, and can run at 8MHz ***(eight times faster than a standard '64! — Brian)***. Cassette and cartridge ports would be disabled, and the RAM chips would have to be replaced with faster ones. BASIC would operate and interpret at 8MHz — quite an improvement — and copying the ROM into RAM would make it faster. The disk drive could also be upgraded. I really would appreciate your opinion on this topic.

Jeremia J Schouten, Zoetermee, Netherlands.

● *Well, I have three pages of technical specifications and diagrams here from Jeremia, and I'm very impressed. However, I've tallied up the price of the project (for readers in the UK) and parts would cost around £400-£500. Plus there's a risk you'll damage your computer, and that would cost at least another £100 to replace. If you just happen to have spare '64's sitting around (like me) it's worth considering, but games software would be almost impossible to play — imagine Tetris running eight times faster! Due to the expense and danger, I can't recommend it to COMMODORE FORCE readers, but I will say I've heard a German company are developing the idea as a plug-in upgrade, so here's hoping...*

Brian

deals with interpreting keys (called the CHRGOT routine) is changed to point to our new code, which checks for the function keys. If one is placed, the DATA that's been POKEd into memory is copied into the keyboard buffer. The routine then exists, leaving the command in the buffer and printed to the screen.

*If you get extra spaces or funny symbols, delete them. The * means a RETURN, and so pressing F1 (in our example program) will cause the program in memory to run.*

Brian

PROGRAM TIME

● *And now, the second big program of the month...*

```
1000 REM "SPLIT SCREEN"
1010 FOR I=0 T0 59: READ A: POKE 49152+1, A: NEXT
1020 POKE 56333, 127
1030 POKE 788, 0: POKE 789, 192
1040 REM "CHANGE IRQ"
1050 POKE 53265, PEEK (53265) AND127
1060 REM "INTERRUPT AT RASTER LINE 30"
1070 POKE 53266,30
1080 REM "INTERRUPTS ON"
1090 POKE 56333,129: POKE 53274,129
1100 POKE 53281,0: POKE 53280,0
1110 BA=8192
1120 POKE 646,1: PRINTCHR$ (147)
1130 FOR I=BA TO BA+7359: POKE 1,0: NEXT
1140 REM "SET COLOURS"
1150 FOR T=1024 TO 2023: POKET,1: NEXT
2000 FOR X=O TO 319 STEP.5: REM "DRAW CURVE"
2010 Y=ABS (INT (80*ABS (SIN (X/10))))
2020 CH=INT (X/8)
2030 RO=INT (Y/8)
2040 LN=Y AND 7
2050 BY=BA+RO<320+8>CH+LN
2060 BI=7-(X AND 7)
2070 POKE BY, PEEK (BY) OR (2◊BI)
2080 NEXT X
2090 GOTO 2090
5000 DATA 173, 25, 208, 41, 1, 208, 3, 76
5010 DATA 49, 234, 141, 25, 208, 173, 18, 208
5020 DATA 48, 21
5030 DATA 173, 17, 208, 9, 32, 141, 17, 208
5040 DATA 169, 25, 141, 24, 208, 169, 225, 141
5050 DATA 18, 208, 76, 188, 254
5060 DATA 173, 17, 208, 41, 95, 141, 17, 208
5070 DATA 169, 21, 141, 24, 208, 169, 30, 141
5080 DATA 18, 208, 76, 188, 254
```

Basically, the machine code is contained in the data statements and is POKEd into memory at location 49152. It's made up of three parts — the first decides which interrupt has happened. The next part deals with the interrupt at raster line 30 (in the top border); it sets bitmap on (the bitmap is stored at locations 8192-16191). The third part is to turn the bitmap off at raster line 225 and turn the computer into text mode. If you want to change the height of the split (to give yourself more text), alter the 225 in line 5040 in steps of plus or minus 8 for each line of text you want. It must be between 51 and 251.

Brian

LIST YOUR DISK

Dear Brian,

I've had a C64 for eight years but it's the first time I've sent a letter to you. I have a problem I think only you can solve. I want you to tell me how I can print a list of my disks.

Hatzikiriakids Kornilios, Thessaloniki, Greece

● *If you have a printer that is set to device 4, try the following:*

```
LOAD "$",8
OPEN 4, 4: CMD4: LIST
PRINT#4: CLOSE4
```

That will print out the directory of the disk in device 8.

You can either cut it out and stick it on the disk sleeve, or keep them in a folder. The directory shows you the following information:

```
0 "DISKNAME"          ID 2A
```

The drive, name and 2-letter ID of the disk

```
99 "PROGRAM"          PRG
```

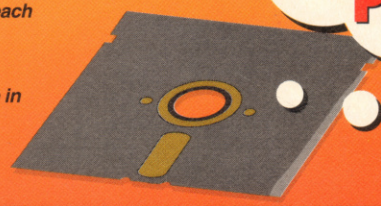
Size, name and type of each program

```
200 BLOCKS FREE
```

How much space is free (divide by 4 to give a value in kilobytes)

That'll sort you out methinks.

Brian



HOW THE HELL DO I PRINT ME?

GOT ANY ID?

Dear Professor Brian,

I'll get straight to the point. I had a disk full of utilities, and one allowed you to change the ID on any track of a disk. I chose track 18 (the directory track) and now it's impossible to load any of the files. How do I get my directory back?

How can I have the screen split in two, with the first 23 rows bitmap and the last two text?

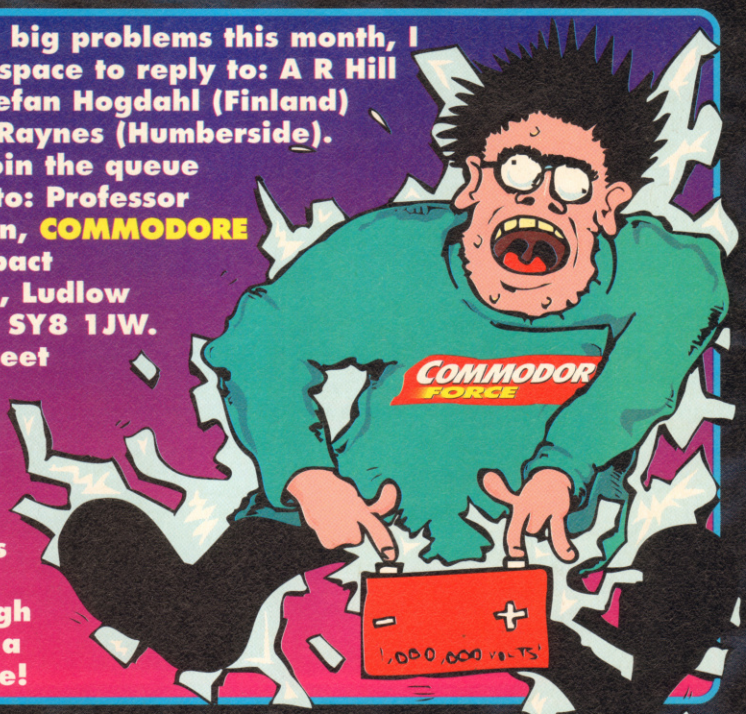
John Kopsidas, Athens, Greece

● *Firstly, I must apologise to John for the length of time it's taken to get a reply to him. Magazine schedules meant it's been held over for a couple of months, and our efficient inter-office Postal Service didn't help (it's just Miles pushing a trolley around!).*

Right, for those who don't know, a disk has two sorts of ID — the ID you can see in the directory, and then a separate ID on all the tracks. If the ID on one track doesn't match the rest, the track can't be read in properly, and if you changed the directory track (number 18) there's nothing I can do. Try using a disk copier to make a backup, as that might help.

Brian

With those big problems this month, I ran out of space to reply to: A R Hill (Luton), Stefan Hogdahl (Finland) and Mark Raynes (Humberside). Anyway, join the queue and write to: Professor Brian Strain, COMMODORE FORCE, Impact Magazines, Ludlow Shropshire SY8 1JW. Until we meet again, remember that only the straw that broke the camel's back can pass through the eye of a needle. Bye!



THE GA

Another opening of another show, another column raring to go! Yes, it's Professor Brian Strain, back again to guide you on the path to true enlightenment. Along the wild and treacherous way this month, we continue our look at sprites, and delve into the mysteries of raster interrupts. We also have fun with a well-known character...

THE MULTICOLOURED SPRITE SHOP

If you've been following the series carefully, you'll know that a sprite doesn't have wings (unless you define them that way) and doesn't live at the bottom of your garden (unless you've got a very long extension cable and a comfortable garden shed!). So, to take sprites one step further, we introduce a new technique called MULTICOLOUR sprites. This means that in every sprite we can have four colours. There's the background colour, the sprite's colour and the two multicoloured locations. Now the two multicolours are the same for every sprite displayed in multicolour at any one time; this means you have to choose carefully.

THE MATHEMATICAL BIT

Don't worry; it's quite straightforward. If you saw the first part, you'll know that sprites are made up of 21 rows of 24 pixels. However, in multicolour mode the grid becomes 21 rows of 12 pixels. The reduction in width allows us to use the following method to determine the colour:

Returning to the theory that each byte represents eight pixels, we now say that each byte contains four 'pairs'.

If both bits of a pair are set to zero, the BACKGROUND colour is displayed in those two pixels.

If the left-hand bit is set to 1, the SPRITE colour (set in location V+39 to V+47) is shown.

If the right-hand bit is set to 1, MULTICOLOUR 1 (location V+37, that is location 53285) is shown.

If both bits are set to 1, MULTICOLOUR 2 (location V+38) is shown.

To actually set a sprite into multicolour mode, take its sprite number (0 to 7) and POKE V=28, PEEK (V+28) OR (2↑N)).

This sets sprite N into multicolour mode, and leaves the other sprites on whatever mode they were already in. If you're confused by this mysterious letter V, it's actually equal to 53248 (you must set it by saying V=53248 in a program). From location 53248 upwards in memory, you can alter the settings that affect the VIC-II chip, the Video Interface Chip.

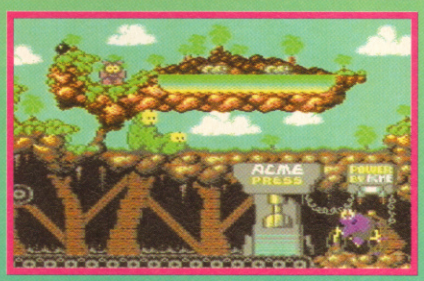
To return a sprite to monochrome (single colour) mode, where each 1 or 0 represent a pixel that's in SPRITE or BACKGROUND colour respectively, use this line (again N is the sprite number 0-7): POKE V+28, PEEK(V+28) AND (255-(2 N)).

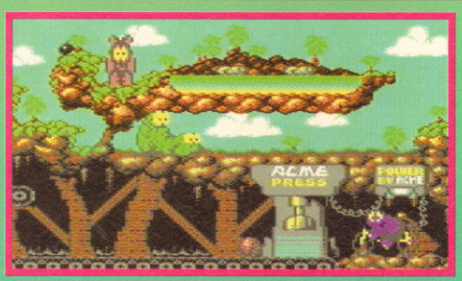
Next month, I'll bring you a full table of the memory locations affecting sprites.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

The first listing this month will re-create a little sequence you may have seen in a famous game, *Creatures 2*. The hero, Radcliffe, Fuzzy rescuer extraordinaire, has just picked up a magic potion. These provide you with extra weapons. Type in the program below, RUN it, and Clyde will change size and shape. Clyde is a multicolour sprite designed by Steve Rowlands. It also demonstrates how to expand and shrink a sprite.

```
10    REM MONSIEUR RADCLIFFE
20    POKE 53281,0
30    FOR T=0T062
40    READ U
50    POKE 12288+T, U
60    NEXT T
70    V=53248
80    POKE 2040,192
90    POKE V,100: POKEV+1,100
100   POKE V+37,11
110   POKE V+38,7
120   POKE V+39,10
130   POKE V+28,1
140   POKE V+23,0: POKE V+29,0
150   POKE V+21,1
160   FOR P=1 TO 250: NEXT P
170   Q=0
180   POKE V,88: POKE V+1,100:POKE V+29,1: POKE V+23,0
190   FOR P=1 TO 250: NEXT P
200   POKE V,100: POKE V+1,79: POKE V+29,0: POKE V+23,1
210   FOR P=1 TO 250: NEXT P
220   Q=Q+1: IFQ <4 THEN 180
230   END
240   DATA 005, 001, 064, 025, 069, 144, 026, 086
250   DATA 144, 025, 085, 144, 021, 153, 080, 006
260   DATA 238, 064, 039, 255, 080, 107, 119, 100
270   DATA 171, 255, 168, 166, 238, 168, 169, 153
280   DATA 168, 105, 085, 100, 168, 084, 084, 165
290   DATA 001, 080, 021, 085, 080, 022, 086, 080
300   DATA 026, 086, 144, 026, 154, 144, 026, 086
310 DATA 144, 026, 154, 144, 026, 154, 144, 000
```





MES GURU

TOP TECHNIQUES

Rather than bore you with lots of data to type and long tables, this month I thought I'd add a little section on how to use sprites in games. I'll describe the basic ways to define each sprite needed in the game, using examples from real games.

1) **Monochrome Sprites**: Originally, most games featured monochrome sprites but the extra detail they give doesn't make up for the lack of colour. Monochrome sprites are excellent for other purposes though…

2) **Multicolour Sprites**: The majority of games use multicolour sprites. If not properly drawn, sprites can look very blocky, but with three colours per sprite (although two must be set and used in every multicolour sprite) there are plenty of ways to make up for it — highlighting, shading and so on. *Creatures 2* features hundreds of multicolour sprites, from Clyde himself through to many of the baddies. Steve Rowlands' technique is to use the two multicolours as a light colour and a dark colour. With careful highlighting and drawing, sprites appear solid and slightly 3-dimensional.

3) **Expanded Sprites**: By joining more than one sprite and moving them together, you can create massive aliens, just right for the end-of-level attacker. The *Shoot-'Em-Up Construction Kit* allows you to do this with its 'Join Enemy' option, allowing two or more sprites to be linked to one enemy, and they move around the screen with it. Unfortunately, it's impossible to get all the parts to explode at once, so blowing the head off a dragon doesn't kill it…

PROGRESS INTERRUPTS…

Every 50th of a second, a small beam re-draws the television/monitor picture you watch while your computer is switched on. With clever timing, the C64 can tell where that beam is on screen. By causing an INTERRUPT, the C64 can jump to a separate routine, change something, and return to what it was doing. Now this RASTER BEAM, as it's called, allows us to read its location, or even wait until it's at a certain position before executing something we want to happen.

The following program demonstrates a fascinating effect called 'Sprites in the border'. By changing ONE location every time the raster beam reaches the bottom border, we can get rid of it and see sprites placed in it. Note that this new 'open' area wraps around to the top of the screen, so sprites placed too low will appear to be at the top as well. Once you've got the program typed in, and the border disappears, you can try two things:

1) By altering location 16383, you can display 'lines' in the border. Try it and see what happens.

2) Use last month's example program to place a sprite with a Y position between 230 and 255, or between 0 and 49.

These will be visible with the border removed.

```
10 FOR I=49152 TO 49247
20 READ D
30 POKE I,D
40 NEXT D
50 SYS 49152
60 PRINT CHR$ (19) CHR$ (17) CHR$ (17)
'WHERE ARE MY BORDERS?'
70 PRINT 'TRY LOCATION 16383!'
80 END
1000 DATA 120, 169, 127, 141, 13, 220, 173, 13
1010 DATA 220, 169, 27, 141, 17, 208, 169, 249
1020 DATA 141, 18, 208, 169, 64, 141, 20, 3
1030 DATA 169, 192, 141, 21, 3, 169, 1, 141
1040 DATA 25, 208, 141, 26, 208, 169, 147, 32
1050 DATA 210, 255, 169, 14, 169, 0, 141, 32
1060 DATA 208, 169, 1, 141, 33, 208, 169, 0
1070 DATA 141, 255, 63, 141, 134, 2, 88, 96
1080 DATA 169, 1, 141, 25, 208, 173, 17, 208
1090 DATA 41, 247, 141, 17, 208, 173, 18, 208
1100 DATA 208, 251, 173, 17, 208, 41, 127, 9
1110 DATA 8, 141, 17, 208, 76, 49, 234, 208
1120 DATA 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0
```

4) **Enlarged Sprites**: Enlarging sprites (like in the example program given earlier) can create special effects, or even make an enemy seem more menacing. *Creatures 2* (a veritable mine of material on how to make a good game) features the 'Snatcher' from the bonus rounds. With careful use of colour (and joining more than one sprite together) we have an enlarged, expanded 'sprite' at the top of the screen, grabbing flying Fuzzies…

5) **Overlaid Sprites**: Basically, overlaying involves designing a monochrome outline (usually in black) and placing it over a multicolour sprite, moving them together. This gives you the detail of monochrome sprites with the extra colours. *Batman The Movie*, *Navy Seals*, *Robocop*, *The Untouchables* and *The Addams Family* all feature overlaid sprites, either just for the player or (in *Navy Seals*) for the player and for the enemies. The disadvantage is the number of sprites onscreen; you can rapidly reach the eight onscreen limit. The only way to get around this is to use a multi-plexor — an ingenious effect using RASTER INTERRUPTS, which just happens to be my next topic…

So, that's how raster interrupts can help the games programmer. Over the next few months I'll demonstrate how you can add to this basic routine to place the current score/lives in the border, without affecting the main area. Remember, if there's anything you want covered in a future column, please write to: Professor Brian Strain, COMMODORE FORCE, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW Until next month, goodbye from the Guru!

PLAY NOT PAY! TOP GAM

GUNSHIP	C64, SPC, CPC
HUNTERS MOON™	C64
PITSTOP II™	C64
TIGER ROAD™	C64, SPC, CPC
SWIV	C64, SPC, CPC, ST, AG
ARMALYTE™	C64
D…	C64
CRACKDOWN™	C64, SPC, CPC, ST, AG
GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS™	C64, SPC, CPC, ST, AG
RICK DANGEROUS	C64, SPC, CPC, ST, AG, PC#
MULTIMIXX 1	C64, SPC, CPC
MULTIMIXX 2	C64, SPC, CPC
TURR…	C64, SPC, CPC, ST, AG
SILENT SERVICE	C64, SPC, CPC
3D POOL	C64, SPC, CPC, ST, AG, PC3
SUMMER CAMP	C64
MULTIMIXX 3	C64, SPC, CPC
MULTIMIXX 4	C64, SPC, CPC
MULT…	C64, SPC, CPC
TUSKER™	C64, SPC, CPC, ST, AG
ACTION FIGHTER™	C64, SPC, CPC, ST, AG, PC#
ROAD BLASTERS™	ST, AG
BLASTEROIDS	C64, SPC, CPC, ST, AG, PC
GARY LINEKER'S SUPER STAR SOCCER™	C64, SPC, CPC
CHAMPIONSH…	C64
OUT RUN™	C64, SPC, CPC, ST, AG, PC
TECHNOCOP™	C64, SPC, CPC
QUE-DEX	C64
TURRICAN II™	C64, SPC, CPC, ST, AG
HAWKEYE™	C64
BARB…	C64, SPC, CPC, ST, AG
CARRIER COMMAND	ST, AG, PC
CREATURES	C64
MOONWALKER™	C64, SPC, CPC, ST, AG, PC
VIGILANTE™	C64, SPC, CPC, ST, AG
MYTH	C64, SPC, CPC
IMPOSSIBLE…	C64, SPC, CPC, ST, AG
STRIDER II™	C64, SPC, CPC, ST, AG
SWITCHBLADE™	ST, AG
GAUNTLET™ II	ST, AG
STAR GLIDER 2™	ST, AG, PC3
FLIMBO'S QUEST	C64, CPC, ST, AG
ITAL…	C64, SPC, CPC, ST, AG, PC
CALIFORNIA GAMES 2™	ST, AG, PC3
WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD™	ST, AG, PC
JOHN LOWE'S ULTIMATE DARTS™	ST, AG
LAST NINJA 3	C64, ST, AG
MICROPROSE SOCCER	C64, SPC, CPC, ST, AG, PC#
SAV…	C64, SPC, CPC, ST, AG, PC
1943™	ST, AG
SKIDZ™	ST, AG
PANZA KICK BOXING	ST, AG, PC
DRAGONS OF FLAME™	C64, SPC, CPC, ST, AG, PC#
SUPER MO…	C64, SPC, CPC, ST, AG, PC

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GE — ST, AG, PC3	BIONIC COMMANDO™ — ST, AG, PC	Z-OUT™ — ST, AG	NINJA REMIX — ST, AG	TOTAL ECLIPSE — ST, AG, PC3	FIRE & BRIMSTONE — ST, AG
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FORMAT KEY

C64	CBM 64/128 cassette	ST	ATARI ST
SPC	SPECTRUM 48/128K, +2 cassette	AG	AMIGA
CPC	AMSTRAD CPC cassette	PC	IBM PC & COMPATIBLES

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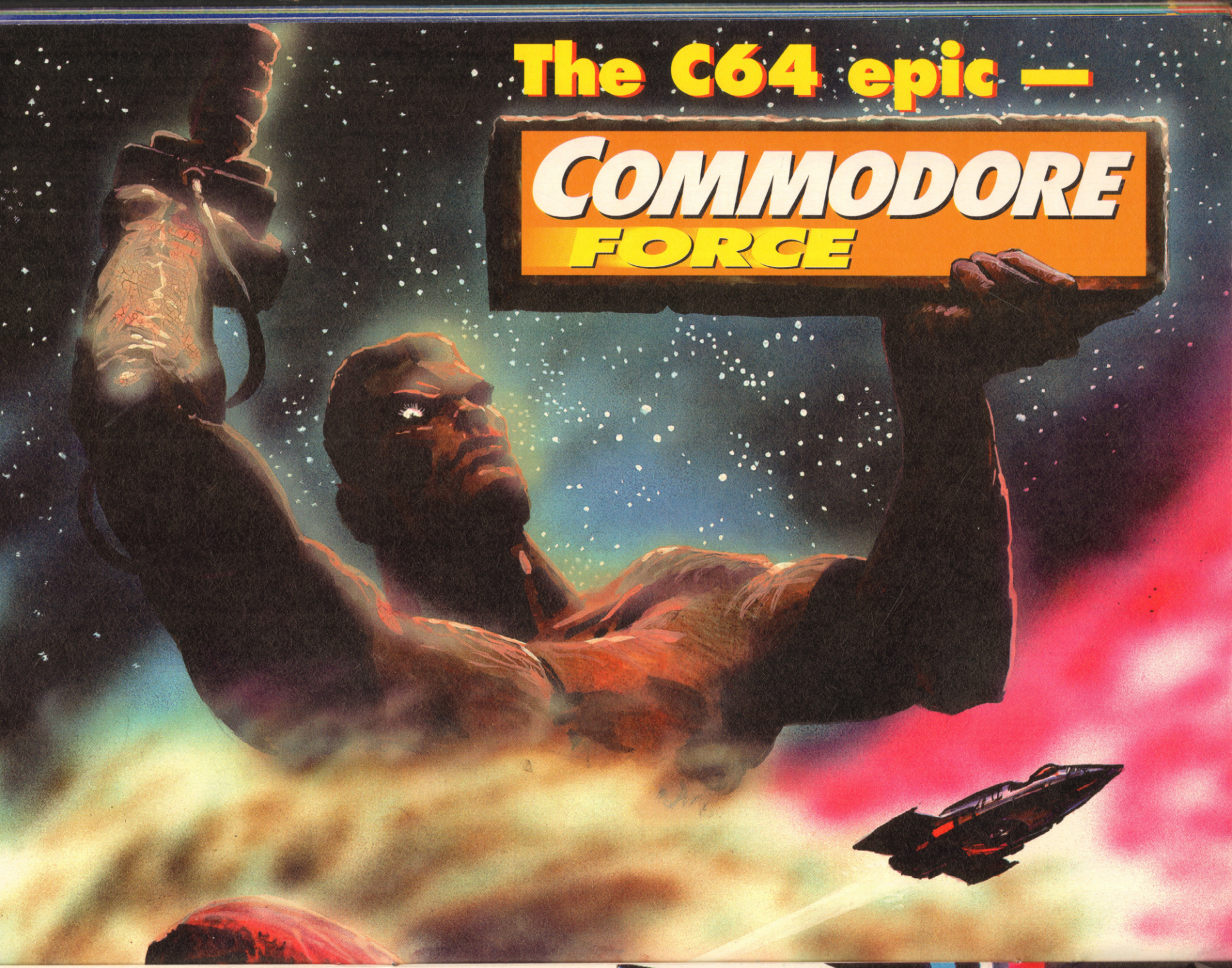

A NEWSFIELD PUBLICATION

WHO DID WHAT?

ZZAP! 64 and COMMODORE FORCE have had hundreds of people working on them in one form or other during the years. Although we'd like to list everybody who's ever worked on the mag, the credentials would just go on and on. Of course, all departments, whether production, reprographics or advertising, are important, but in the end, you — the reader — only get to look at and read the mag. So, being on the editorial team ourselves, we've decided to list all the people who have either written or designed ZZAP! 64/COMMODORE FORCE since the beginning. For our job security, the daunting big bosses are included too.

- Wayne Allen (Illustrator, Assistant Art Ed, Senior Designer)
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- John Bates (Contributor)
- Andrew Braybrook (Contributor)
- Ciaran Brennan (Sub Editor, Contributor, Editor)
- Mark Caswell (Contributor, Staff Writer)
- Paul Chubb (Art Assistant)
- Ian Craig (Illustrator)
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- Richard Eddy (Staff Writer)
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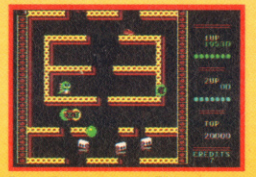
GOLD STANDARD

Of all the games reviewed in ZZAP! over the years, the following titles received the awe-inspiring ZZAP! Gold Medal Award. Originally an accolade bestowed upon software rated 97% and above, it was changed to 96% after feedback from readers suggested the 97% minimum was a little too harsh. Although its usage was discontinued after the appearance of COMMODORE FORCE, the weight it carries as a recommendation still stands. Ironically, there's only been one game reviewed in the past ten issues that would have been awarded it — Ubi Soft's excellent *First Samurai*.

Alter Ego	Activision	98%	13
Armalyte	Thalamus	97%	43
Ballblazer	Activision	98%	8
Barbarian 2	Palace	96%	40

Just behind *IK+* in the beat-'em-up stakes, but offers far more variety of play. Its graphics are of an amazingly high standard; monsters lurch and heroes stride in a convincing fashion. Unmissable

Batman:	Ocean	96%	55
Bombuzal	Imageworks	97%	44
Boulderdash CK	First Star/Dtabyte	97%	20
Boulderdash 2	Prism	96%	30
Bounder	Gremlin	97%	10
Bubble Bobble	Firebird	97%	30



Conversion of the popular bubble-belching coin-op. Great fun as a one-player game, manic with two, *Bubble Bobble* is one of the few games that could be described as timeless — it's still as much fun as it was originally.

Buggy Boy	Elite	97%	32
California Games	Epyx/US Gold	97%	29
Creatures 2	Thalamus	97%	81
Creatures	Thalamus	96%	68
Driller	Incentive	96%	33

Revolutionary in its time, but its lack of speed does become tedious after a while. *Driller* will appeal to the more patient, but is still worth a look nonetheless.

Elidon, The	Activision	97%	10
Electrosound	Orpheus	97%	8
Fields of Fire	SSI/US Gold	96%	12
Frankie goes to Hollywood	Ocean	97%	5
Germany 1985	SSI/US Gold	97%	11
Ghosts 'N' Goblins	Elite	97%	17
Ghouls 'N' Ghosts	US Gold	96%	57
Golden Axe	Virgin	96%	67
GAC	Incentive	N/R	17
Great Giana Sisters, The	Rainbow Arts/GO!	96%	39
Hawkeye	Thalamus	96%	40
Head over Heels	Ocean	98%	28
Heavy Metal Paradroid	Rack-It	97%	49

Remix of the original *Paradroid*.

IK+	The Hit Squad	97%	60
Impossible Mission 2	US Gold	96%	38
Kikstart 2 (128)	Mastertronic	96%	16
Koronis Rift	Activision	96%	9
Leader Board	Access/US Gold	97%	15
Little Computer People Discovery Kit	Activision	97%	7
Mercenary	Novagen	98%	11
Microprose Soccer	Kixx	97%	85
Nebulus	Hewson	97%	32
Nobby the Aardvark	Thalamus	96%	89

Nobby the Aardvark received the last Gold Medal to be awarded to a C64 game. Despite its high difficulty level, it was a well-deserved accolade.

Paradroid	Hewson	97%	7
Project Stealth Fighter	Microprose	96%	35
Rainbow Islands	The Hit Squad	96%	81
Rambo	The Hit Squad	96%	53
Revs	Firebird	96%	10
Scapeghost	Level 9	97%	5
Scarabaeus	Ariolasoft	96%	8
SEUCK	Outlaw	N/R	32
Slamball	Americana	96%	15
Space Rogue	Mindscape	97%	58
Spindizzy	Electric Dreams	98%	14

Brilliant, ageless… affix other superlatives as required. One of the few games to receive 98%, its isometric wonder makes it worthy of the honour.

Spore	Bulldog	97%	33
Strike Fleet	Electronic Arts	96%	36
Summer Games 2	US Gold	97%	5
Tetris	Mastertronic	98%	50
Turbo Charge	System 3	96%	76
Turbo Outrun	US Gold	97%	56
Turrican	Rainbow Arts	97%	61
Turrican 2	Rainbow Arts	96%	70
Untouchables, The	Ocean	96%	55
Wizball	Ocean	96%	27
World Games	Epyx/US Gold	98%	19
Zoids	Martech	96%	12

shelves to meet a tremendous response. Ten issues later and we're still going strong, with our huge amounts of readers proving the world of the '64 is still very much alive and kicking.

Of corse, much of the exposure would never have been exposed if it wasn't for the one magazine that has now become a milestone – ZZAP!64. So next time you're just flicking through a back issue or the latest COMMODORE FORCE, stop and think. Not only is it the best mag for C64 users, it's also the most experienced. And now, there's nothing more to say than… happy birthday ZZAP!64 (oh, and COMMODORE FORCE too!).

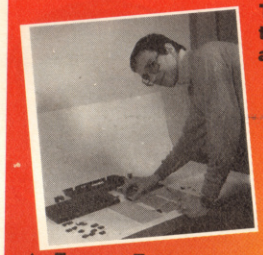
Before the Force

From Issue 42 onwards, ZZAP!, after much debate and continued pleas from readers, decided to cover Amiga games as well the standard C64 stuff. At the time, this seemed like a sensible idea — the Amiga was only just coming into the limelight, and looked to be the natural upgrade from the '64. There was an obvious change in the title to ZZAP! 64/AMIGA, and this ran for over twenty issues.

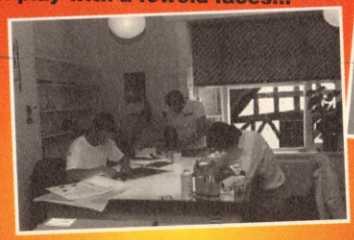
Eventually, the name reverted back to ZZAP! 64 with the sub-heading C64/Console/Amiga (the console mentioned was the Commodore GS which soon bombed due to poor software support). Amiga coverage eventually took a back seat in Issue 74 so that ZZAP! 64 was, again, 100% C64 dedicated. Of course, our sister mag wasn't even a gleam in our publisher's eye back then, but at that point, ZZAP! was back on track with the '64.

THE FAMILY ALBUM

These are the pictures they tried to ban — the ZZAP! management at play with a fewold faces...



▲ Franco Frey smashing a Spectrum...



▲ The old ZZAP! Editorial offices before the move...

▲ Julian Rignall — ex editor of ZZAP! and his shirt...

▲ Roger Kean, our Publishing

▶ Oli Frey creating a cover with able assistance from Rockford...

▲ Oli at the old ZZAP! awards ceremony...

ZZAPED!

To write a feature on the history of a magazine — or indeed anything — it's usually advisable to allocate the work to someone who knows the subject matter particularly well. Who better, we thought, to write this ZZAP! feature than Lloyd Mangram? Take it away, Lloyd...

So, we've finally done the ton. Personally, I've never doubted we'd make it; I've always had faith in the C64 as a machine, and just as much in ZZAP!/COMMODORE FORCE as a publication. Having been with ZZAP! since the beginning, I think I could honestly say I've seen it all; editors come and go, much-awaited releases turn out to be turkeys… and of course, letters. Think of a number that's pretty darn big and you'd probably not be thinking of a sum higher than the amount of letters I've opened…

'So what's the point in a ZZAP! pull-out' I heard you cry. 'ZZAP!'s dead, isn't it — COMMODORE FORCE took its place'. To answer: COMMODORE FORCE incorporates ZZAP! 64. We're 100 issues old now, and we'd like to pat ourselves and our many readers — contributors or not — on the back with this mini commemorative issue. I've no doubt some people may sneer at that; my advice is — don't knock it. We're here to entertain, and we've received bundles of mail requesting a ZZAP! lookback. To those people: here's the lookback, hope you like it. To those who chortle behind their hands 'cos they think it's too self-congratulatory — big fat hairy rasps, you ignorant fools.

Ahhh, that's better. No matter how satisfying it is helping out a troubled reader, it's even more fun insulting the occasional idiot. Perhaps that's childish of me to think that but, hey — back to the point, and on with the (mini) issue…

Lloyd Mangram

A CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION

In the beginning of time there was darkness. There was no light, no life to speak of. If you think there are too few games releases these days, just think what it was like back then! Anyway, after the world appeared and went through all that tiresome evolution business and stuff, something wonderful happened. That's right — ZZAP! 64 was launched.

May 1985, and Britain was Britain as usual. Politics were still being talked, money played its familiar, important role, and religion still dictated the way of life for millions worldwide. But although life seemed to continue to revolve in a continuing circle, there were many — seemingly insignificant — revolutionary happenings.

At the time, the subject of computers and video games was hardly a topic for dinner party discussions — in fact, nobody could have really expected the widescale growth of the computer industry as a front-running source of entertainment. Most machines (such as the Atari VCS, or the early ZX machines) didn't have the power to sufficiently impress; the first computers were basic and sadly primitive in their design. Subsequent to the launch of the Spectrum and C64, things changed. Initially, Sinclair got it right. Commodore's insistence on portraying the C64 as 'more than a games machine' almost led to an early death for such a promising piece of games hardware. Eventually, things began to take off, and the only thing that the Commodore lacked was decent magazine coverage. Early computer titles — with few exceptions — were jargon-filled and not as easily accessible as recent publications; the scant games coverage and emphasis on 'serious' software a definite turn-off to a fair few C64 owners. So, was that an opportune moment for an interesting, well-written and — above all — games-orientated magazine to hit the market?

You bet your shoes it was.

All systems go

Having already launched the Spectrum magazine CRASH, to fantastic response from the growing software industry and buying readers alike, Roger Kean, Oliver Frey and Franco Frey and a talented editorial team started a new C64 project. Originally, it was to be called Sprite and Sound, but a last minute change of heart lead to the name ZZAP! 64 — eventually, the first issues hit the news-stands. The initial group of writers consisted of Chris Anderson (who's he?), Gary Penn, Julian Rignall and Bob Wade.

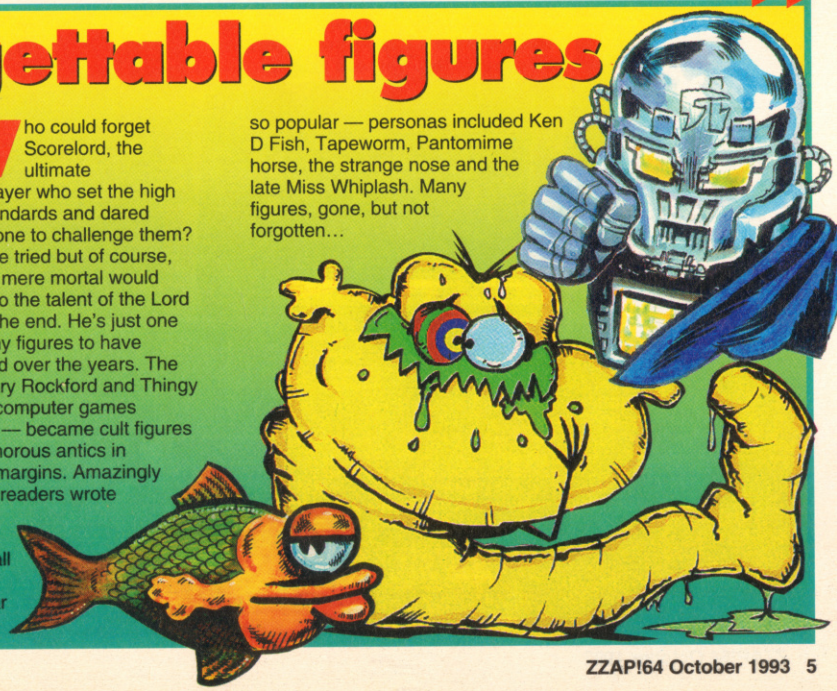
Issue Three saw the departure of Chris Anderson and Bob Wade — both couldn't accompany the magazine in its move to sunny Ludlow. It was at this point (well, Issue Four) that I (Lloyd) joined, having worked on CRASH since the beginning. No stranger to the world of computer journalism (or working for peanuts, for that matter), I'd write various articles before I eventually took the reins of the letter page… ZZAP!'s seen many editors, art editors, staff writers — many have moved on to pastures new or, occasionally, to black voids from which they've never returned. Whatever *did* happen to Mark Caswell? Writers for ZZAP! — as a rule — were always talented and much sought-after journalists.

The new age...

As ZZAP! continued through into its eightieth issue and beyond, it had changed into a magazine almost unrecognisable from its original form. Although it still catered for C64 users, it had changed in so many ways — its full-colour pages and 'mega' tapes being notable examples of just *how* different it was. However, after the results of ZZAP! last reader survey had been collated, it was decided that, although readers were happy with ZZAP!, it was time for a change. COMMODORE FORCE — incorporating ZZAP! 64 — was born. The name placed Britain's brightest C64 magazine in line with its sister publications — namely SEGA FORCE, AMIGA FORCE and N-FORCE — and the first edition hit the

Unforgettable figures

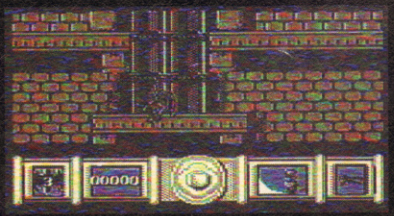
Who could forget Scorelord, the ultimate gamesplayer who set the high score standards and dared everyone to challenge them? People tried but of course, every mere mortal would succumb to the talent of the Lord of scores in the end. He's just one of the many figures to have appeared over the years. The legendary Rockford and Thingy — two computer games characters — became cult figures with their humorous antics in ZZAP!'s page margins. Amazingly enough, many readers wrote in, asking how they felt being on the edges all the time… Other popular — and not so popular — personas included Ken D Fish, Tapeworm, Pantomime horse, the strange nose and the late Miss Whiplash. Many figures, gone, but not forgotten…

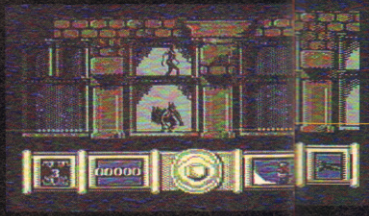


BATMAN RETU

Games programming is often a tedious affair; the endless hours of codes, coffee and 'stack errors' become a little too oppressive after too many late nights. Apparently. Bearing this in mind, the Dentons mob went on holiday. When they returned, Roy Bannon decided that *Batman Returns* could take a hike this month, and he'd tell the world about his vacation instead. Never ones to restrict creativity, we let him relate his tale...

Batman Returns and games programming may be very interesting, but once in a blue moon or every other month of Sundays — whichever is the longest — something wildly exciting (to me at least) happens. 'We're all going on a summer holiday'. Is it a modern day credo, or a rather naff pop song — can anyone say for sure? Still, the fact remains we were all going on a summer holiday, all set for fun and laughter for a week or two — well, a few hours or so at least. A holiday is a holiday nevertheless; be it in exotic climes or just down the road in New Brighton — believe you-me, it counts all the same. Let no-one tell you that distance is a guarantee of excitement and proximity a recipe for boredom. Some of the most thrilling adventures one will ever experience are to be found on one's own doorstep. Take the pyramids, the Mardi Gras carnival, the Orient and leave me good old New Brighton — truly a shining, facet upon this gem of a land. New Brighton, where purest waters roll onto silken sands, where the pressures of life are lifted from one's shoulders by





TURNING!

the gentle hands of serendipity and the seagulls serenade each soul that comes to experience its pleasures. Yes indeedy.

A squall gathered to the east and moved so rapidly towards us that I found myself leaning backwards, almost falling as I watched it approach. The grey blanket of cloud contorted, it's litheness hinting at the power locked within it, and passed above us to sit like some fearsome succubus upon our hearts. For a few short moments, beneath that dread veil, we stood silenced by it's majesty — then the rain fell. A tsunami of water thrashed at us, bending our heads to the ground where puddles formed instantly, merged in seconds and soon formed a boiling, frothing lake as far as the eye could see. We stood shocked, soaking, all conscious thought driven from our heads by the noise that could have been some unabating explosion or perhaps even Armageddon itself.

Meanwhile, back in reality, it was your average sort of not very nice but not terribly nasty day. The sun shone when it could be bothered and didn't when it didn't, the clouds lightened and darkened for similar reasons and fortunately the ground was content to just lie there and not do much at all.

Too see the sea...

The seaside can be a pretty interesting place after you've passed the boredom threshold and gone beyond the apex of ennui. Suddenly, even disgusting black seaweed seems interesting. Picking it up and chasing someone for half a mile down the beach seems like a really fun thing to do — even if you hate the touch of the stuff, and the person trying to escape couldn't care less if you rammed it down their throats. Still, you have to laugh, don't you? Crabs are a real hoot too — I spent a good half an hour watching one male it's slow, stately progress into the water before someone kindly pointed out that it was dead. Some people are just spoil sports.

The major drawback with a day out at the beach is — of course — sand in your socks, shoes, hair, butties, ears, nose, eyes, lungs, lower intestine, spleen, ventricles, synapses, sinuses, sub-glutinous tissues, major arteries and, most terrifying of all, underpants.

Inevitably, someone suggested a game of frisby. Yawn! I pointed out that we didn't have a frisby, which was a bit of a mistake, because then we had to find one — I reckon we probably could have got away with a game of 'invisible' frisby. A few hundred or so shops later, we found one within our price range (50p) and made our way back four miles to the beach. I reckoned it'd take everyone about 10 minutes to realise just what a tedious thing frisby throwing is, but overestimated by a factor of 10 or so. The petulance started almost immediately. 'You're crap', 'The wind blew it off course', 'I'm not going to get that', 'This frisby's no good.', were familiar battle cries for as long as the game lasted. Almost exactly 60 seconds after we'd begun, an equine came into the equation. We all stood around a small, circular piece of blue plastic lying in what is best called a steaming mass, wondering about the sagacity of playing near the donkey trail. No-one was too intent on rescuing the frisby, and I thought that was that. Someone suggested buying another frisby and was comprehensively glowered at. Then, in a moment of misunderstood sarcasm, I proposed a game of French cricket. To my dismay this was heralded as a cataclysmically brilliant idea and with a budget we were off round the shops again. Luckily, (for me, anyway) £2 won't buy you even the most pathetic cricket bat and ball. I tried to hide my grin as we all sat on a wall outside Woolworth's, pondering inflation and getting all morose about how things had changed since we were kids.

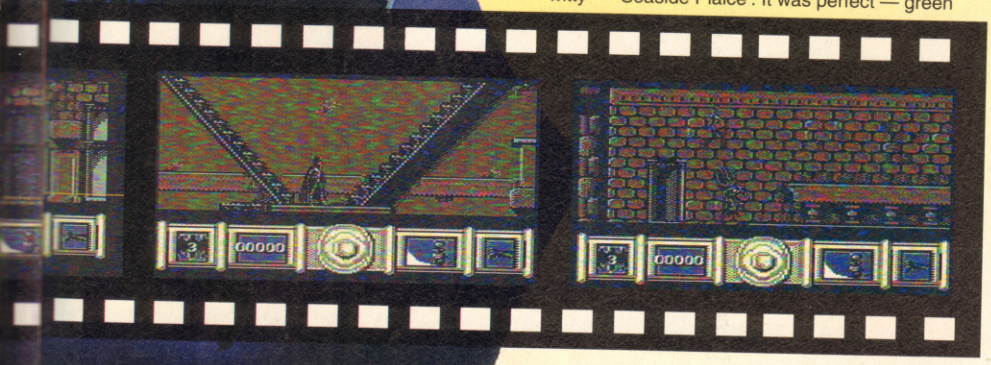
Fish and Chips. It's got to be really. You may fancy a pizza or a burger but you've got to have Fish and Chips (and no, you can't have a pasty!). As an extra special treat (and because we were all cold and tired by now) we went to one of those places where you sit down to eat your fish and chips. The one we discovered was called something really witty — 'Seaside Plaice'. It was perfect — green and white plastic table-cloths, dirty cutlery, clogged salt and pepper pots, food stained menus and a waitress who exuded loathing for us tourists with a reassuring intensity. The fish was full of bones, the chips were cold, soggy and very artistically spread across the plate to give the impression that there was more than half a dozen of them. There was ample butter on the bread but unfortunately it only covered a very small area and resisted all attempts to spread it. Consequently we each got four mouthfuls of dry bread and one sickening mouthful of pure fat. The tea looked fairly nice but no-one dared risk putting their lips to the mugs, not knowing how close the nearest hospital was and whether you could bleed to death through your lips. Still, it made the cold world seem better when we made it out. Which, I'm sure, we only just managed — the waitress was holding a large knife as we paid the bill and there was a glazed look in her eyes. We left a sizable tip bargaining on the fact that we'd probably get out alive as long as we ran like hell whilst she fumbled around in the till.

In search of amusement(s)...

To the beach or to the amusement arcade? It was a tough decision — the beach was free and the amusement arcade wasn't . It started to spit so we plumped for the amusement arcade. First port of call for me was the Penny Falls — or the 'Pennies Completely Defy Gravity', as they should be more accurately named. Someone dragged me off then when I started ranting and threatened to break into another quid in my vain attempts to get any to fall. 'Just one', I cried. 'If just one falls, I'll stop. They move, why don't they fall?'. I'd barely taken two steps away from the machine when there was an amazing clatter, and I turned back stunned to see a little old lady casually stuffing her pockets with the pennies I'd been inadvertently priming for her. Bah. Skeet shooting next. Ten pence to point a lump of wood (that would almost resemble a shotgun if it wasn't the cello tape and the 45 degree kink halfway along) at a barely perceptible glow on a section of cloth painted with green things which were, presumably, meant to be trees. The large, red LEDs seemed to indicate I'd scored 175 points and, as a test, I parted with another 10p and scored 175 without even lifting the gun. Hmmm. All this time, calling to us silently but irresistibly, were the bingo seats all down one wall. We knew that the prizes were worth less than the entry charge, we knew we had minimal chance against the expert grannies, we even knew that Bingo was probably the most facile form of entertainment thought up since fish massaging, yet we couldn't resist. 6 minutes 47 seconds later... who knows? I may have won if I hadn't been looking at my watch constantly. Afterwards, we were all 50p worse off but quite relieved we didn't have to spend the rest of the day carrying around a brass flower vase that could single-handedly spoil the decor of any room in any house on the planet.

We left the arcade and with a deep regret (that it hadn't happened much earlier?) we made our way back to the car. We had a game of count-the-coloured-cars which I — rather surprisingly — won with dark grey, when several Panzer divisions passed us going through the Mersey tunnel.

I went to bed tired but content (although I couldn't tell you why) and started dreaming about bits, bytes, pixels and the strange inhabitants of Gotham City...



THE MAKING O

After last month's instalment, our Dutch programming friends experienced a few problems. REMI EBUS reports...

REMI: In the last issue of COMMODORE FORCE you read about the team's first impressions of the *Lemmings* conversion. Everything was still going smoothly and without any major problems…

You can probably already guess what I'm going to say next… major troubles! Basically, our graphicer — Nikaj Eijk — wasn't doing his part of the job. You may have read or heard the rumour(s) about other potential productions involving Alter Developments (now called E&E Software Company) such as *Zool* and *Troddlers*. Well, we're still looking for a company interested in publishing *Zool* on the C64, but the problem in question was *Troddlers*.

At the Spring ECTS show in London, we agreed to do *Troddlers* for The Sales Curve as it was a *Lemmings*-clone of sorts (we even had to change our contract with Psygnosis to enable us to work on *Troddlers*!). A representative of The Sales Curve promised to send out a copy of the game, which we would use to make a few small demos — as we did with *Lemmings*. But The Sales Curve didn't send us a copy of their game; several puzzled letters and phone calls resulted in complete nothingness. But we were still interested in the game as we felt it had some potential, so, half a year later, we decided to make a demo-version of a five-level Amiga demo of the game. A week later we got up to 40 Troddlers walking around in a very early version of the game, and then sent our efforts to The Sales Curve. Their feelings on the demo were included in a small letter that stated they weren't interested with a C64 *Troddlers* project, but a few phone calls later we knew better. It seemed that another (Dutch) team were also working on *Troddlers*. That team had already been offered a contract, but if we

PART TWO!

G OF Lemmings™

could come up with a better version of *Troddlers* than theirs — before they had signed up — we *could* conceivably been given the project. However, the contract offered didn't give us enough security to continue — even if we had made a superior version in the short time scale available, we'd have only been paid royalties (a percentage for each sold copy of the game) and no advance. So we decided to drop the *Troddlers* conversion.

All very interesting isn't it? But why all this in a *Lemmings* diary? Well, we knew the other team and guess who was doing the graphics for *Troddlers*? Nikaj Eijk! Not only did he snatch a conversion away from the company he worked for (at that time still Alter Developments), he also was working on another game while he should have been working on *Lemmings*! I don't think anyone could imagine how angry we were with Nikaj at that time! Our first intention was to completely abandon Nikaj, not using any of his graphics and not paying him a single dime.

But if we had done that, *Lemmings* would've been delayed even further, so we decided to use the levels he'd already finished at that time, and divide the rest of the graphics between several other freelance graphicers, which seemed to work initially. However, only two of the five new graphicers actually did anything — namely Alain Jansen (intro graphics) and Leon Van Rooy (level graphics) — so the *Lemmings* team currently looks like this:

Programming:	Thomas Mittelmeyer
Music:	Jeroen Tel
Graphics:	Leon Van Rooy
Intro Graphics:	Alain Jansen

While we would have finished *Lemmings* 2-3 months before the official deadline we're currently a month behind, but both ourselves and Psygnosis are both confident that we'll have *Lemmings* finished in the very near future (and that's the VERY near future, I hope). Enough stories (read: excuses), let's hear what the team has to say…

THOMAS: This has been a relatively quiet period for me, as I've had to wait for graphics which, obviously, were delayed after the incident with our former graphicer. But don't think I didn't have to do anything for ages; one of the first things I did was to improve my level editor, and it's now at its very best. Now I can edit an average level in ten minutes! But I also improved my main routine several times in my quest for extra memory — I'm always glad to get some extra free bytes to fill up again.

Several extras I'd planned to include at the outset of the project never got a chance to be featured. For example, when a Lemming explodes on the Amiga it'll splat out in several points which fly through the scenery (quite cool actually). In the beginning I planned to include that, but, due to memory restrictions, couldn't. I also discovered *Lemmings* has an end-sequence: a picture of a Lemming surrounded with pictures of DMA Design, the team responsible for the original *Lemmings* on the Amiga. There was also a digitised sample of the team clapping their hands and cheering about the fact that you'd made it through all 120 levels, so *that* has to be included as well…

A few weeks ago (at the time of writing), Greg Duddle — the producer from Psygnosis — came over to the Netherlands, so I had to edit all 60 levels we'd finished at that time. You see, when I showed some of them to Greg, it seemed that I'd made a few mistakes, as the Lemmings refused to enter the exit, but saw it as just another piece of the scenery. Luckily, that only appeared in ten of the 60 levels, as I'd worked throughout the night to complete that preview. At that meeting Remi had also brought along three tunes from Jeroen for *Lemmings*, and they sounded brilliant! I don't know if you've ever heard the Amiga music, but it's rather (read: very) simplistic, but Jeroen managed to add something special to make it sound a lot better while still keeping the cuteness necessary for *Lemmings*. I can't wait to hear the rest. Well, I'm off — I've just noticed (yet) another bug…

LEON: When Remi called me and asked if I'd like to work on *Lemmings*, I was over the moon — things had been a little quiet at the time. I was very happy to do some game work again — especially as it was *Lemmings*. When I got the Amiga graphics and the converted C64 ones, I immediately started work. To date, my favourite levels are the ones we named 'The Blue Levels', with their light, blue and fleshy rose colour combinations. These also feature the green jelly (no, not the band!), which I've changed so that they now, in my opinion, look even better than the Amiga version! When I'm in a good mood I'll complete three levels a day, but believe me — drawing the same kind of pictures day-in and day-out soon becomes tedious. But still, when the *Lemmings* graphics tend to get on my nerves, I switch to drawing something else, or thinking that every day the completion of *Lemmings* draws nearer and nearer…

Well, that's it for *Lemmings* this month. Jereon Tel was too busy working on his new CD (mentioned last issue) to contribute to this issue's diary — apparently, it's going to be excellent. That aside, there's great news for mouse owners — *Lemmings* will be compatible! According to Remi, it plays like a dream using one, although that's not to say it doesn't work well with your standard joystick. Until next month, then...

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MANGRAM'S MAIL BAG

Hello everyone. It's a sun-bathed Ludlow from which I ply my trade this month. I, Lloyd Mangram, do solemnly acknowledge that summer is once again upon us, bringing with it all that is normally associated with the holiday season. Unfortunately the growing feud between Chris and Miles over who's the rightful Tipster is creating an uncomfortable atmosphere. We await further developments...

HEAL THE WORLD

Dear Lloyd,

This is the first time I've sent you a letter but I want to send a message to the C64 users all over the world and the software houses: We love our C64. Stop trying to kill it off, because the C64 is the most popular computer in the world.

COMMODORE FORCE, continue your job. We are proud for you. I have almost 1000 games and utilities.

Hatzikiridkidis Koruithos. Thessalonki, Greece

● *Hands across the ocean and all that. The Commodore will keep on going as long as there's people around to support it. We don't get all that many letters from the land of the Gods, so keep carrying the flag for us over your way, will you?*
LM

MORK AND MIDI

Dear LM,

Recently, I bought a C64 — and what a bargain it was too!

After years of craving for one (and having a go on a friend's machine), I finally got some dosh together — lo and behold, I got a C64 and 70 games for £65 (if I was an unwell person, I would have just bought one game for a Nintendo).

I started getting your mag around May and I'd say it's spot on. Being new to the computer scene, it's helped me loads to buy the best games; I've had a great time with such games as *Flimbo's Quest*, *Rodland*, and *Creatures*, to name but a few — you know your stuff. I'm also enjoying Back To The Feature — it's nice to see those good old games of yester-year.

I'm a musical person and make up lots of different tunes, and I fancy trying to do music for computer games. I've got a keyboard with MIDI capabilities, but could you tell me what equipment I'd need to program music for the C64? My knowledge of programming is zero.

Datel offer a C64 compatible midi interface — see their advertisement elsewhere this ish. They'll be able to tell you what you want to know.

Is *Sensible Soccer* going to be released on the C64?

Now let's nip this little line of questioning in the bud.* Sensible Soccer *is NOT going to appear on the C64, did everyone hear that? Good.

Matt Barron, Benwell, Newcastle

● *Congrats on resisting the hype and going for a friendly old C64. To get maximum enjoyment from it, be sure to keep reading COMMODORE FORCE — we're all professionals here, with years of gaming behind us. When it comes to rating games, you'd be hard-pushed to find a more accurate team. As for Back To The Feature; well it's proving to be one of the most popular sections ever. Thanks go to James for that one 'cos it was his idea. (Okay Lloyd, I'll give you the fiver later — James).*
LM

A BIG SECOND HAND

Dear Lloyd,

Firstly I would like to say how great COMMODORE FORCE is, especially 'Back To The Feature'. I've owned my C64 for about eight years now, and unfortunately have to agree about the low availability of most games. I was fortunate to pick up lots of old games from boot sales and second-hand shops, so I would urge people to visit them. But (this is where I beg), although I got *Jet Set Willy* for 50p, and *The Fourth Protocol* for 10p, they don't have the necessary codes, and instructions to play them — could you or your zillions of readers possibly help?

Also, I've been trying to buy *The Bard's Tale 2* and *3* but Software City said it would be hard to obtain them — even from Electronic Arts (the original publishers — Ed). Could you please print EA's address?

Paul Mullen, Clydebank, Glasgow.

● *Unfortunately, copyright laws mean it's impossible to send you the instructions for the games you required. As for the Bard's Tale games, Electronic Arts can be contacted at: 90 Heron Drive, Langley, Berkshire SL3 8XP. Good luck!*
LM

BACK ON TRACK

Dear Lloyd-type personage,

Having read ZZAP! since Issue Four I've seen a lot of change in the magazine. While it has been through many a bad patch, it's now almost out of it's worst quality decline. I did think this was the inevitable end of the C64 era, but it seems I was wrong. While new releases are scarce, you've shown there's life in the old girl yet with the more technical side of computing being shown — the German hard drive sounds good. Public Domain and the features on the classics from the Commodore's gaming heyday also help make the magazine better. Keep these improvements coming. The mag isn't as humorous now as it was with 'Kool' Maff, 'Mad' Kati, 'Blubbery' Gordo and 'Crap at games' Paul, but it is getting more interesting to read than it was under (Fnar!) Miss Whiplash.

While games quality seems to be in decline, it's actually improving — it's just that us veterans have seen most gamestyles a hundred times, and no longer find them so addictive or fresh as the old 'classics' of yester-year. Forgive us our rose-tinted spectacles, Lloyd, but then you're antediluvian (look it up in the LMLWD) enough to understand, surely…

Why don't you reprint an issue worth of old tips and cheats each month, or at least repeat the tips for classics such as Impossible Mission, Frankie etc.

I know from your reply to the occasional requests that re-printing old issues would be very costly, but how about if you get letter writers to vote for those they want printed — say they choose five of the old ZZAPs, from a list with contents to the first thirty or so issues. If you do this then my votes would go to issues One, Two, Three, Seven and Nine.

Someone, Somecounty, Sometown

I'm glad you like the mag, but 'not as humorous'…?

With regard to the covertapes — I don't think there can be any doubt that we're now providing some of the hottest freebies ever (cue self-congratulatory smile).

I'm afraid re-printing old issues wouldn't be financially viable. As for re-printing tips — we prefer to provide for the majority. Most C64 users these days don't own games featured in the really early issues of ZZAP!, but if we're led to believe otherwise (ie I receive loads of mail informing me how wrong I am) then we'll happily provide.

LM

WET KIPPER of the month

INDECENT PROPOSAL

Dear Commodore Force

I've got an Amiga 500 (one meg) and I've written to ask if I send Commodore tapes off the front of the magazine, will you send me Amiga disks back? If so, will I have to pay and if I do, please say how much.

Andrew McNair, Northallerton, North Yorkshire

Andy, Andy, Andy — it seems we have something of a misunderstanding here. This is a Commodore 64 magazine. That means, in laymans terms, that we cater for Commodore 64 users. By strange coincidence, the covertape games are also designed for Commodore 64's. If you wish to experience the delights they carry, you need a Commodore 64. In the meantime, have six of the best from this month's rancid fish.

LM

ALTERNATIVE VERSE

Dear Lloyd,

I've a little poem for you:

Ham and eggs, just don't compare
To the goldfish I won down the fair
And la de daaa, oh de de de
What an opportune end to my poetry

It's a great bit of verse, that. I know it's not sophisticated — apparently, rhyming poetry isn't so cool any more — but I suppose it makes a change to moaning about consoles. God, those awful moaning minnies; I'd rather eat my boxer shorts that sink down to their level. Anyway, some questions:

1) Why are consoles so useless?
2) Why are console carts so expensive?

I wonder if my pants would taste better with salt and pepper or not. Oh well, goodbye.

Poet Breath, Button Bridge, Kinlet

Chris reckons Ketchup would go down well with them, but Miles is a Mayo man, and as such has recommended that. Me? Well, I wear underwear but I've not yet had the urge to consume it. Bananas, on the other hand — now there's a foodstuff.

LM

SHANE'S STORY

Greetings, Lloyd, from the Zarbon Nebula.

I'm afraid this is a letter of complaint. Only yesterday I was zooming across the space-time continium to Earth to buy my July issue of the fab COMMODORE FORCE. Once I'd arrived, I discovered it had gone up to £4.00 in the beautiful Emerald Isle of Ireland (that's where my space ship landed). How can people (or even a Zarboni, like me) afford that?

Please print this letter or I'll get my mates the Daleks after you!

Shane Storey, Kilree, Zarbon.

You're lucky — the normal exchange rate of one Zarbon Krabbit is roughly equivalent to 0.08 pence sterling. This means that, with the current state of the economy, you paid a fraction of the standard going rate (less taxable duty) for the edition (eh? — Ed). By the way, if the Daleks couldn't defeat Jon Pertwee, I doubt their skills somewhat.

LM

LETTER OF THE MONTH

A MEAGRE TEAM

Dear Lloyd,

Recently, I was flicking through the computer magazines in a book store, when my gaze fell upon AMIGA FORCE, sister mag of our favourite medium for all things Commodore. It was while scanning the editorial box (for familiar names) that I noticed, with few exceptions, the

ALL ABOUT ME

Dear Sir/Madam

I would like to congratulate you on the best magazine in the whole universe.

I would also like to say that I'm glad I've got a C64; the only thing going against it is the time it takes to load (but I'm getting a disk drive to speed things up).

I'm annoyed with Ocean giving up on the Commodore and cartridges. I have five carts: *Terminator 2*, *Robocop 2*, *Navy Seals*, *Shadow of the Beast* and *Battle Command*. None of these are particularly good.

I got my Commodore for Christmas '91 after originally asking for a Sega Game Gear. I didn't know a thing about the C64 — in fact, I hadn't even heard of it before! I'm glad I didn't get a Game Gear, though, because they're a rip-off. I used to have a Spectrum (don't laugh!) but now my sister uses it.

I've been getting every issue since ZZAP! 64 Issue 85. I look around my nearest newsagents to find it.

The only hardware I have is my C64, an Action Replay cart and datasette. After that long, boring letter ***(Boring? Nonsense — LM)*** I've some questions for you.

1) Have you got an idea what *Alien 3* is going to be like on the C64? I've played it on a Mega Drive and SNES and it's brilliant.

C64 Alien 3 will be close (if not identical) to the Mega Drive version in terms of design.

2) I've played on an Amiga and would like to buy one — do you think I should get one instead of a disk drive?

What sort of question is that to ask a C64 mag?

Kevin Johnson, Romford, Essex

It's a shame about the failure of C64 cartridges but I can't agree with your opinion on Battle Command, Robocop 2 and Navy Seals — but I suppose it's all down to personal taste really. Still, the powers that be lay down the law, and all we mere mortals can do is put up with it. Sad but true.
LM

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Dear Lloyd,

Back To The Feature is an excellent idea. I missed eighteen month's worth of issues — around the end of 1990 — and a complete year-by-year index would be brilliant (if ya fancy doing one). I've learnt my lesson this time though; I'm subscribing!

I agree with John Kavanagh (Issue Six), though; I think the '64 still has a fair chance if the larger companies gave NEW cartridge-based games continued support. They're now here for the THIRD time and STILL haven't been established firmly — only Ocean has pushed them and now it seems they're just content to release normal games while programming the big Christmas releases (if there's going to be any!)

The blame must also lie with the big loss of creative programmers such as Andy Braybrook, Archer Maclean, Martin Walker, Paul Woakes and others too numerous to mention (at least Chris Butler and the Darling brothers are still here). Right now, programmers are either cutting their teeth with their games, or wasting time trying to outdo Mega Drive software with more and more cute shoot-'em-ups. The *Creatures* games were brilliant but enough is enough; that genre is too easy to get sick of. We should be looking at brilliant '64-style games. By that, I mean forgetting other machines and seeing what can be done within the limits of the C64. I'm thinking of *Psi Warrior*, *Paradroid*, *Uridium*, *Shadow Fire*, *Turrican* 1 and 2, all of which started life on the humble '64 but (in some cases) have now been converted UP to more powerful machines (*Armalyte* was derivative but wiped the floor with the licensed *R-Type*!)

One of the best examples is the first *Speedball* on the Amiga. The arena was so large and players were so spread out that the game may as well have been an ice-skating simulation. On the humble '64 the players and court were no longer than three screens and what did you get? Fast, exciting action and a bitterly competitive game, in a single speedy load, surpassing the much improved Amiga *Speedball 2* by 2-3 years!

I'm sick of cutesy crap; there's already too much on the MD and let's not overrun the '64 with Seymour and Dizzy without a good balance of more ambitious software.

Kenneth Henry, Enfield, Middlesex

Unfortunately, the green grass of hulking great profit margins is tempting top programmers away to pastures grazed by flocks of consoles. What's left, however, is a great opportunity for new talent to emerge with huge ready-made user base for support.
LM

COMMODORE FORCE team is identical to the AMIGA FORCE team.

Has this been the way since AMIGA FORCE's launch? I remember in ZZAP! the crew complained of not having enough time in the month to prepare the magazine — so how on earth do you manage to put together two magazines now? Excessive amounts of caffeine? By the way, I didn't get a chance to look at the letters pages, but are you answering all things Amiga too?

Now some questions:

1) What on earth has happened to *Brides of Dracula*? Did it run into licensing problems with the recent film or is it being touched up to be released as a film licence?

The project was scrapped when someone realised the game was looking decidedly naff.

2) Will Phil be making a cameo return for the Microprose Soccer Challenge?

We asked him, but he scuttled off muttering something about a groin strain. Hmm...

3) Any chance of an ABC sales figure? The last one printed in ZZAP! was blanked out!

Stay tuned.

4) How about nudging one of the major companies to buy the licence to produce a *Crystal Maze* game, perhaps a cross between the Epyx sims and *Fun School*!

The Commodore version could be a blast on cartridge.

We can only hope...

5) Oli Frey will be pleased to hear that his *Street Fighter 2* cover was featured briefly on an Irish programme about computer games. I don't think the C64 has had this much exposure since Ms Whittaker bu(r)st forward from that Barbarian advert (nudge, nudge, wink, wink knowwrramean, say-no-more).

Also, Oli, congratulations on the marvellous artwork for Issue Six).

Yep, nice one Oli.

6) If that really is you and not Steve Shields with a paper bag on his head? Why isn't your name on the list of staff writers? What with that and the buttons they pay you — you should join a union!

I'd have a little glance at that list if I were you.

Thanks for the five pages of letter-bliss in COMMODORE FORCE Issue Six. Here's to many more months of curious queries, unusual anecdotes and Wet Kippers.

Derek Scally, The Banned Brain, Raheny, Dublin 15

Their secret's out! The COMMODORE FORCE gang do supplement their meagre incomes by moonlighting on AMIGA FORCE, but it's for purely fiscal reasons — honest! And they're such busy, workaholic beavers it's untrue. As for the letters, AMIGA FORCE mail is dealt with by none other than Phil King. For your investigative work beyond the call of duty, a mystery prize (there it is again!) is winging its merry way to you.
LM

THE GOOD OLI DAYS

Dear Lloyd,

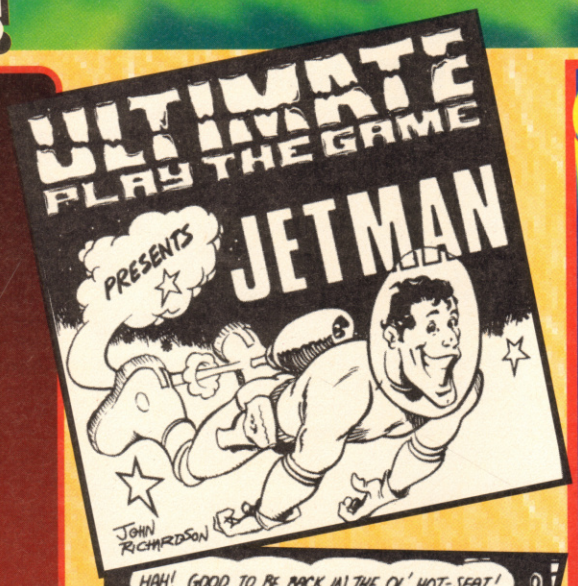
Having been around on the computer scene since the 'good old days', I've been through just about everything from the Electron to the SNES. But after a long stay in the wilderness, I've returned to the machines that gave me the most pleasure — the C64 and Amiga.

It seems all the mags these days (for the console generation) are written by kids, for kids. How long can the C64 survive in this monopolising, console-mad industry? At least it's good to see a well-written and genuinely funny mag appearing, your bag back on its letters page and superb Oli Frey artwork (in my opinion the best bits of CRASH and ZZAP!). How about a funny computer-based comic strip like *Jetman* (the other best bit of CRASH).

Yes, I know I'm just on a sad nostalgia trip, but it looks as though those 'good old days' are now well and truly gone.

S Brealey, Beeston, Notts

● *It's true that things have changed, but you have to move with the times. CRASH and ZZAP! belong to a different era; in their heyday, home computing was still very much in its infancy. Today, the video games industry has a far higher profile and involves incredible amounts of cash. COMMODORE FORCE strives to maintain the traditions of its illustrious predecessors while retaining its own identity. What would it be like if things hadn't progressed? Jet Set Willy 11 perhaps? Hmph!*
LM



SNIPS

SHAVEN SHARDS OF SCINTILLATING SILLYNESS

Can you remember Mathew Writhers in Letters issue 6, pointing out how great the C64 is? He's buying a SNES — Mathew is a traitor!

Shane William Barret

● *We've got your number, Writhers — be warned!*
LM

The surrealism doesn't suit you and it isn't funny.

Neville Kay, Huntingdon

● *'Funny' is a limited notion of which few but the most enlightened have more than a beansprout to a lettuce (Pardon? — Prod Ed).*
LM

Lloyd, this has been puzzling me for some time — are you wearing any underpants? I'd really like to know.

Emlyn Williams, Southend.

● *I wear a paper bag to conceal my features, and a paper bag to hide my face.*
LM

BUT WHAT ABOUT THE SID CHIP?

Dear Mr Lloyd,

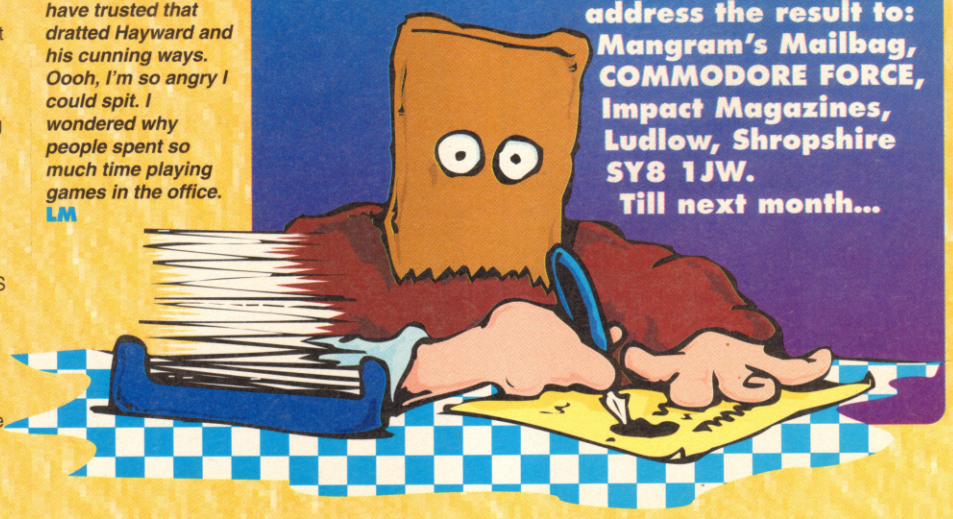
I've been rather confused lately about your magazine. I've been buying it since the very first issue and been reading each from cover to cover. It is only recently, however, that I realised your magazine concerns a computer. I was under the impression that it was a monthly publication for fans of the esteemed musical group the Commodores. I was amazed when I picked up Issue One; I couldn't believe someone had actually seen sense and produced a magazine for the finest artists yet — or so I thought. I was under the impression that Lemmings (on the front cover) was some new song the Commodores were working on. Imagine my dismay when not one article in the entire mag was about the band. As for the poster — I was devastated, no group poses or anything! I believe you have a responsibility to the public and that the title COMMODORE FORCE is very misleading. Therefore, I propose you change the name to 'THIS IS FOR USERS OF THE COMMODORE '64 HOME COMPUTER'. As for FORCE, where did that come from? Are you related to Parcel Force? My nephew works for them. Perhaps you know him?

Please, even if you don't give full coverage to the Commodores, could you include a pull-out special on them?

Peter Lush, Planet Distant

● *You mean it's not a magazine dedicated to the Commodores? Oh no — I've been duped. I should never have trusted that dratted Hayward and his cunning ways. Oooh, I'm so angry I could spit. I wondered why people spent so much time playing games in the office.*
LM

So another batch of letters takes a final bow as that big old curtain comes down on my pages once more. A large portion of thanks go to all who've taken the time to write in. To share your opinions, and perhaps win that elusive mystery prize, bring pen into contact with paper and address the result to: Mangram's Mailbag, COMMODORE FORCE, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW. Till next month...



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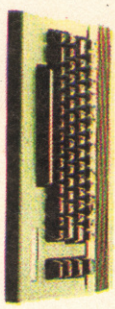

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SCEPTRE OF

After noting critisism of his initial version of *Sceptre of Baghdad*, Jon Wells decided to remix and improve it. However, in a strange marketing move, he forgot to add emphasis to the title by putting 'Turbo' or 'Championship Edition' after it (as with Street Fighter 2). It worked for Capcom, so why not Psytronik? Can this version survive without it? JAMES 'SHEIK IT' PRICE tells all.

● Psytronik, £3,00 Cassette/Disk

Sceptre of Baghdad is unusual in that its plot is so old-fashioned. Storylines have 'matured' so much of late; the basic, almost naive natures of the mid-eighties scenarios are almost embarrassing in this, the age of the sophisticated computer or console user. *Sceptre*'s story is almost — but not quite, I'll add — a welcome breath of fresh air, and a reminder of days when games were home grown and shops stocked games with photocopied paper inlays. Even Lloyd left his typewriter to peruse *Sceptre* and its manual; the entire office population (including the AMIGA FORCE editorial team) took the time to participate in a small nostalgia trip. Ahh, those were the days, eh?

Basically, the game's (photocopied, sob) inlay describes how it was the first day of the year. The beloved Caliph had to show the 'sacred sceptre' to massed crowds to prove his right to rule (while raking it in on the live TV link-up royalties, I'll wager). Disaster struck when the Caliph awoke that morning to find he'd shrunk and his palace was full of demons. After speaking to the genie in his magic lamp, the Caliph discovered an evil wizard had done this to try and prevent the afternoon celebrations, in an attempt to become the Caliph himself!

Sceptre's an arcade adventure of the puzzle-solving variety. Various objects can be collected while exploring its flick-screen map; these in turn can be used in conjunction with other items or utilised on a specific screen. The palace is also full of danger; demons float around its halls and rooms, contact with which drains Caliph's energy levels. Unlike in his first appearance, he's far from defenceless — a stab of the fire button results in a fairly effective shot across the screen. This can be used to clear the halls, but should the Caliph leave the screen and re-enter, the demons will be back in force...

Justified and ancient?

Originally penned for release by the now-defunct Atlantis label, *Sceptre of Baghdad* is finally available through Psytronik — details on whom are elsewhere. Its review by Chris and Miles in COMMODORE FORCE Issue Three pointed out a series of flaws that almost killed its potential. 'The sound's nothing short of astounding' enthused Chris, but of the gameplay he was less than happy. 'Playability must shine through' he wisely commented 'and yes, you know what's coming next — the playability is quite sad'.

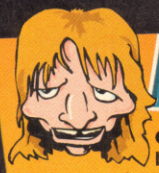
Miles pretty much echoed the erstwhile Mr Hayward's moans. 'Some of the puzzles are far too obscure' he wailed, before adding 'Lateral thinking is one thing, but c'mon; some of this is ridiculous!'. He did, however, close his comment on a slightly more positive note. 'Still, clear, colourful graphics and excellent sound make *Sceptre* a mildly enjoyable wander'.

The problem, you see, is that *Sceptre* is a conversion of an old Spectrum budget game, released way back in 1987. In essence, its original design is its downfall as, compared with recent releases such as *Sleepwalker*, *Trolls* and *Liverpool*, it's a dated affair. It has to be said that as a conversion, it's excellent — pretty much everything from the original is included — and all-in-all, it's a fair piece of coding.

I've no doubt you're wondering why we're reviewing this again. Well, it's simple; *Sceptre*'s changed. Jon Wells (the programmer) decided to tweak the game, change the graphics in places and generally spruce *Sceptre* up a bit. The final version to hit the metaphorical streets is a much-improved outing, with graphical tweaks (the main sprite's different, for example), new puzzles instead of the obscure old and a more realistic difficulty level. Rather that simply avoiding assailants, the Caliph can now dispatch them with a well-aimed shot from his newly-acquired weapon (mentioned earlier). This is a great improvement; sadly, the demons reappear should you re-enter a previously-cleared screen, but ya can't have everything, can ya?

So, I suppose a summary is in order. Basically, *Sceptre* still isn't ground-breaking in any way shape or form. I felt the Spectrum version was dated when it was first released, and that was over six years ago! Nevertheless, Psytronik's first release still has its fair share of charm, and is an appealing platform romp. Just don't expect the earth...

JAMES! 72%

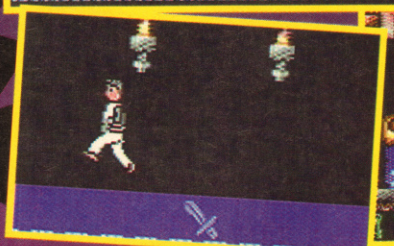


MILES!

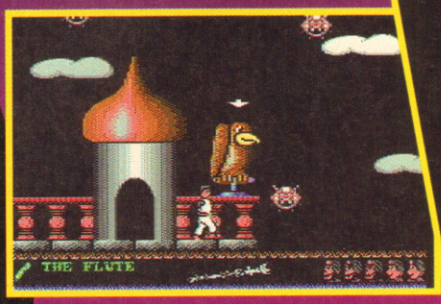
● *Sceptre* seems to have been bouncing around in various guises for aeons now — yet another 'souped up' version throws itself pleadingly into our laps. Unfortunately it still manages to miss the mark in much the same way as before. It's too small, puzzles are still unsatisfactory in their structure and consequently completion of a section gives more a sense of relief than satisfaction. Cosmetic changes consist of improved sound and a new main sprite that's actually far less attractive than the original. Even so, you might like it if you're utterly *Dizzy* wizzy, but it's very dated fare.

62%

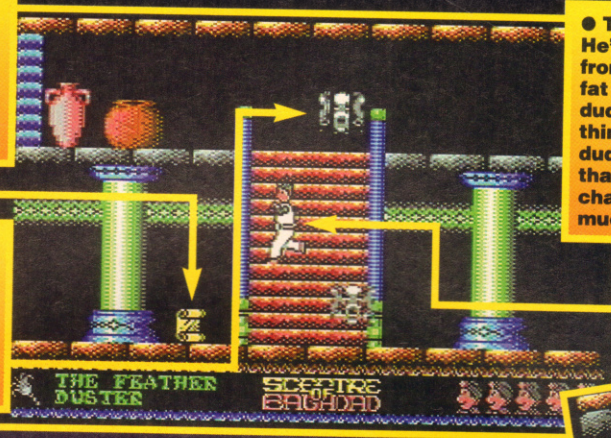
"...Scept still isn ground breaki



● Above: A daring leap by the Caliph. Note the comanding posture, the air of a leader, the... okay, we're taking the p



OF BAGHDAD



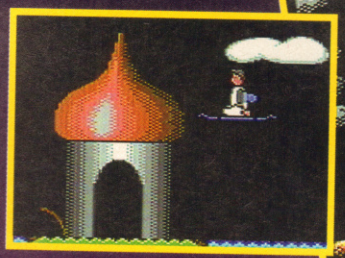
● The scroll. As far as we could see, there's no use for this. Are we wrong?

● A typical demon. These can be avoided or, even better, shot. 'ave some, Mr Nasite!

● The Caliph. He's changed from being a fat turban dude, to a thin turban dude. Not that it changes much...

A TALL ORDER...

So, after reading all this, you'll be wondering how you can get your hands on *Sceptre*. Well, don't bother popping down to your local computer emporium — you've got no chance of finding it there. Instead, send a cheque/postal order made payable to Psytronik Software to: 34 Portland Road, Droitwich, Worcestershire WR9 7QW, remembering to specify whether you'd like Sceptre on cassette or disk. Okay?



"...Sceptre still isn't ground-breaking..."

GALE WARNING

■ **PRESENTATION** ■ INTRO AND END SEQUENCE, OPTION SCREENS. — 79%

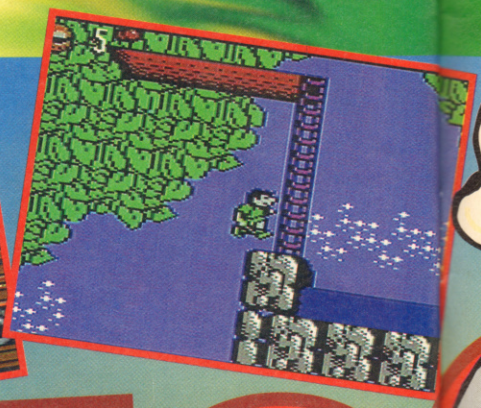
■ **GRAPHICS** ■ GREAT BACKGROUNDS, AVERAGE SPRITES — 70%

■ **SOUND** ■ HUM-WORTHY AND WELL THOUGHT-OUT — 89%

■ **HOOKABILITY** ■ THIS GAME IS INITIALLY PLEASING — 70%

■ **LASTABILITY** ■ ONE RESTART POINT, REPETITIVE PUZZLES — 62%

FORCE FACTOR 67%



HO

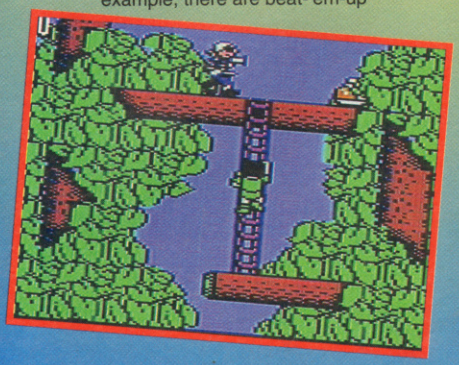
● The Hit Squad, £3.99 Cassette

The loss of a childhood is never easy to come to terms with, and flying is just as disorientating. JAMES 'TWINKLING BELL' PRICE leaps from a window and tries to grow up...

When I was younger, I always wanted to be 'older'. I'd look at grown-ups and it'd always seem as if they knew what to do in any given scenario. I doubt I'd have been in such a hurry to mature if I'd known how complicated things would become, and that my adult life (or at least to date) would be a constant tale of ad-libbing.

However, Peter Pan was the boy who never grew up. No longing for parties, relationships and other assorted adult madness for him; he was quite content in Never Never Land. Or at least, so it seemed. Stephen Spielberg's disastrous continuation of Pan's story was a box-office flop; it also saw an aged, yuppie Pan, living a normal human life (whatever that may be). *Hook*'s C64 manual is particularly brief in its telling of the plot. It reads (in its entirety) as follows: 'Peter Banning is a respectable, hard-working married man with two children — but he is a man with a long-forgotten past which has come back to haunt him… he was Peter Pan!'. It continues: 'Peter Banning's children have been kidnapped by his old adversary, Captain Hook and Peter must travel to Neverland to rescue them and recapture his lost youth along the way'. Fairly basic stuff, yes?

Well that's padded the review out a bit — perhaps I'd better say something about the game. Hook on the '64 is a multi-level affair with many varied gamestyles. For example, there are beat-'em-up



CHRIS!

● Different styles of play and colourful graphics definitely make *Hook* something special, but as James said, the multiload is a killer. Having to reload sections becomes quite arduous, especially if you've slogged away to reach later levels.

The animation of Pan is also crude, as if rigor mortis has just set in. His fighting technique is just as dismal — his arm feebly extends clutching what's supposed to be a sword. On a high note (a D major I reckon), enemies are nice and varied; monkeys throw bananas, snakes rasp out from trees, making exploration a little more interesting. At the end of the day it's up to you. If you like platform games but have an aversion to multiloads you're in a bit of a fix, but as far as I'm concerned: he who waits, plays a good game.

76%

"...if you hate multi loads, avoi Hook..."

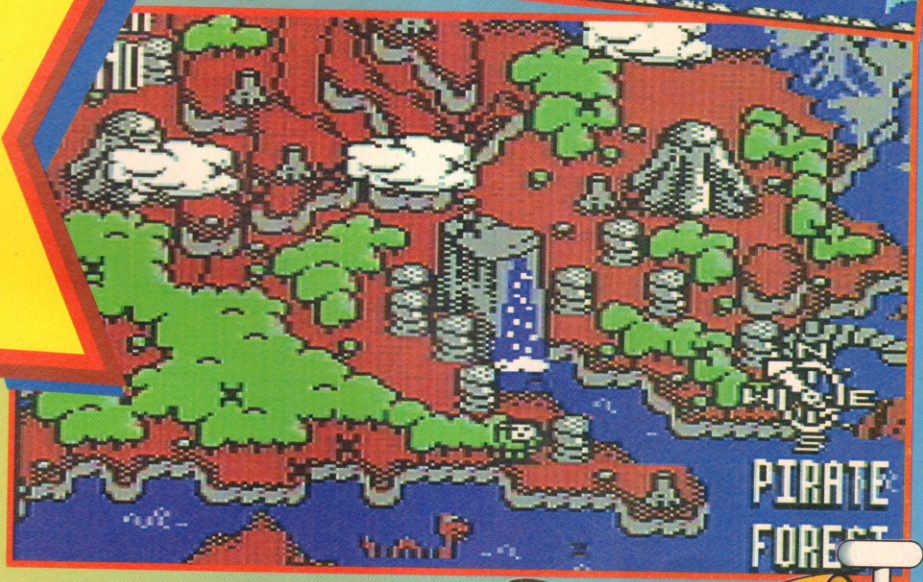
graphi sort of don't a smash fash

is hinc drains an agi platfor swimr swimr avoid to look

But has its the wo versio is diffi also ir

OOK

● While the platform may look safe, it sinks when jumped upon.



sections, an into-the-screen flying level and a large amount of platform collect-'em-up areas. Hook's presentation is excellent, the graphics well-defined and colourful (in a cartoony sort of way). Even the cheery but irritating tunes don't agitate to the extent that speakers are smashed and volume switches tweaked in an 'off' fashion.

> ...if you hate multi-loads, avoid Hook...

Hook, line, and sinker

Platform sections are the game's main element. Wandering around the bright levels, there are various objects to be collected before Pan can make his way to the exit and indeed, exit. In-keeping with tradition, progress is hindered by assorted nasties, contact with which drains Pan's limited energy supply. However, he's an agile sprite, capable of leaping from ladder to platform to rope with the greatest of ease. The swimming areas see Pan — predictably — swimming, with objects to collect and creatures to avoid. In fact, all of the levels are fun to play, good to look at and technically sound.

But, to coin a mangled phrase, every silver lining has its cloud. Hook's multiload is possibly one of the worst I've come across — even the disk version we received for its original full-price review is difficult to get to grips with. It's a shame (and also ironic) that *Hook*'s incredible amount of detail is also its downfall; all those admirable extras extend loading time. So what conclusion is there to be drawn from this? It's a fun game to play, with lots to do and see, but can you stand the waiting? Basically, if you hate multiloads, avoid *Hook* like the plague. On the other hand, if you're willing to ignore all the time spent on tape accessing, you could buy a lot worse.

JAMES! 70%

● After being made to walk the plank, Pan is rescued... good ol' Tinkerbell!

GAME MACHINE

● Zeppelin, £TBA

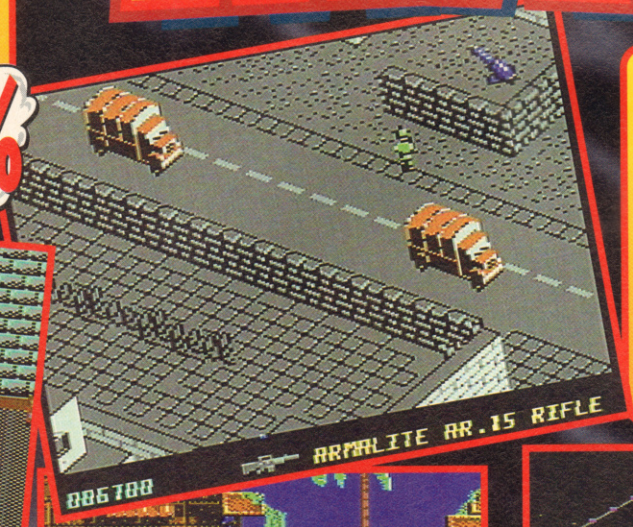
Ten's a very popular number! People have ten toes, James has ten girlfriends and Wimbledon FC usually finish their matches with ten players — apparently. MILES 'TWO SHORT OF A DOZEN' GUTTERY gets a tenner from Zeppelin...

There's something for everyone on Zeppelin's new compilation. Be it sport, violence, cute or puzzly, you'll find it lurking underneath the lid of the box. Let's take a peek shall we... Aargh... Pandora, no...

ARNIE

● Storming in with some good old-fashioned bloodlust comes *Arnie* (great title, eh!). You're one man against an army, striding purposefully around the isometric play area, blasting all and sundry, collecting better weapons and it's actually rather good. *Arnie*'s nothing particularly innovative, although the viewpoint isn't seen all that often in this type of game. Simple, mindless, and probably the best game in the pack.

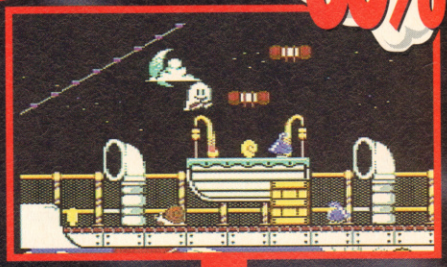
89%



NEIGHBOURS

● This curious license is an even curiouser game. It's an isometric 3D racer — of all things — with four characters from the prog (well, actually not 'cos they've all since left) speeding around Ramsay Street on skateboards, go-karts and whatever else they can lay their hands on. No teenage problems or parent/son/daughter confrontations in sight — just an adequate compilation filler.

60%



SLEEPWALKER

● Not to be confused with Ocean's Comic Relief licence, Zeppelin's *Sleepwalker* is a similar idea, viewed from a different angle. In this, you nudge the sleepwalking Uncle Silas around his mansion and back to bed while getting rid of all the dangerous objects which could wake him up. Short term amusement's generated simply by watching your character getting flattened, blown up and electrocuted for the cause. The let down is the way Uncle C frequently refuses to go in the direction you want and no amount of shoving seems to change his mind, leading to boredom and frustration. Despite this, there's a playable game in there — with perseverance you might find it.

72%

BOD SQUAD

● Nice, cute little graphics don't prepare you for an extremely difficult platformer which allows little margin for error. The main character's a cheerful and superbly-animated little blob who spends most of his time with a spike wedged firmly up his bottom. There's lastability aplenty but patience is required — you really have to feel your way along slowly to avoid a sticky and deflating end. There's enough in *Bod Squad*, however, to keep you at it for some time — just keep plenty of throwable objects to hand...

78%

TITANIC BLINKY

● The ghosty's second appearance on the comp, eh? Well how does he fair this time, I wonder. And... YES — he can now change direction while jumping, but, oh dear! The other game's one fault has been corrected, yet they don't seem to have included any of its good points either. *Titanic Blinky* is by no means dire, but the graphics have a wishy-washy feel and Blinky seems to have lost most of his character. Never mind....

58%

MILES MINE

EDD THE DUCK

● *Edd The Duck*'s a shameless clone of the infinitely-superior *Rainbow Islands*, in which you make your way to the top of each colourful, vertically-scrolling level collecting stars on the way. A potentially fun game, *Edd*'s let down by the mischievous mallard's limited jumping ability. A single strength of leap and slow scrolling leads to all-too-frequent collisions with unseen baddies from above. More often than not you've no chance of evasive action. *Edd The Duck* will soon end up gathering dust due to lack of playability.

42%

FIST FIGHTER

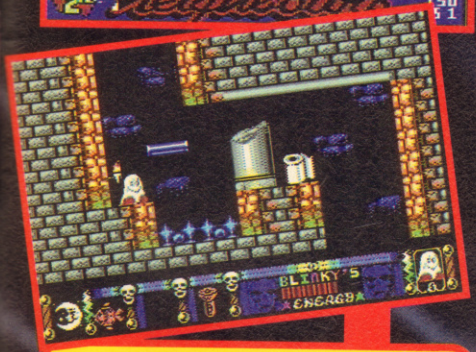
● Aye, aye — duffer alert! Here's a game that's utterly down in the dizzy depths of awfulness. One-on-one beat-'em-ups are something that have been around for a while now. Some are old, some are new, some are great and most aren't. *Fist Fighter*'s featureless, blocky characters lumber around like goldfish in treacle and all-too-often flatly refuse to execute their moves — and when they do, you wonder whether it was worth the effort. The only reason this one will ever be loaded a second time is to see if it really was *that* bad...

25%

ARNIE 2

● After the spanky first instalment, *Arnie 2* should have been something to look out for. Its programmers have gone for a similar viewpoint to the first game but with smaller sprites allowing more on-screen action. There's also more detail in the graphics, but gameplay is hopelessly stunted. Unresponsive controls and the sprites' inability to move behind objects makes for unsatisfactory play and frustration when you get trapped in a corner. A big let down.

49%



BLINKY'S SCARY SCHOOL

● First out of the stalls comes Blinky — a little ghost with big problems. The game's a fairly standard platformer given a little extra polish by some nice graphics and decent toons. There's objects to find, puzzles to solve and one big let down. Had Blinky been able to change direction in mid-jump we'd have a highly-playable cartoon outing on our hands. As it is, progress is just too irksome to keep you interested. Silly innit?

70%

DOC CROC'S OUTRAGEOUS ADVENTURES

● *Doc Croc's* is basically a mish-mash of various platform levels broken up by tedious sub-games that wouldn't tax a moderately well-disposed squid. Platform sections are far too cramped, making avoidance of nasties a laboriously difficult chore. The 'Round The Bend' licence seems very apt indeed. Perhaps Zeppelin knew what they were doing all along — but I doubt it.

42%

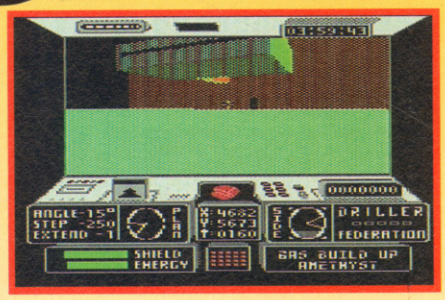
So, one corker, a couple of real pongers and several 'we're in the average bracket but we don't care' types. You get a decent amount for your dosh, but if you already own a couple of the better games included there's not much point in buying it for the wallpaper.

MILES! 78%

BACK TO THE

As we see it, 1988 was possibly the C64's finest hour where quality releases were concerned. Coin-op conversions and movie licences were becoming a way of life, and, while the Amiga charmed its growing followers with cosmetic wonder, the '64 still doled out playability by the truckload. JAMES 'NOSTALGIC' PRICE reports...

Combat School is an arcade machine I've not had the pleasure (or otherwise) of being acquainted with. Its C64 incarnation was, apparently, an admirable conversion. Released at the beginning of '88, its detailed graphics and general cosmetic excellence managed to hide its lack of playability. Why? Because, in *Combat School*, completion of most levels required eye-watering amounts of joystick waggling. There was the occasional splash of variety; the penultimate level was a beat-'em-up involving you and your instructor, not to mention the shooting gallery sections that reared their heads along the way. Yet, as a whole, the game didn't glue — you could see yourself putting the odd 20 pence into the arcade machine, but buying it as a full-price piece of software? Even its simultaneous two-player mode didn't lift it above the average murk of mediocrity.



Incentive's *Driller*, on the other hand, was an altogether innovative development. After years of hard work, **Incentive** managed to program a system — known as Freescape — that allowed the construction of solid three-dimensional worlds or areas. *Driller* was the first of several games to be put together using Freescape; not surprisingly, it was the lesser of the series. At first, it met with massive critical acclaim — it amazed almost everyone with its non-linear gameplay and, of course, stunning usage of solid 3D. After a while though, the novelty began to wear off, and most of its fans began to lust after the one thing it lacked — speed. Later Freescape releases were to provide this — well, more than *Driller* anyway — but it certainly moved the metaphorical goalposts where people's newfound expectations were concerned. Any programmer (striker?) hoping to score with a 3D hit would have one difficult task on their hands...

A less earth-shattering release in the traditional platform mould, was **Gremlin**'s *Jack the Nipper 2*. Whereas its predecessor had tried (and partially succeeded) in offering something new, *Nipper 2* was a basic platform game. Granted, the 'naughty tricks' that made the original so amusing were still incorporated, but only a few of them. They were far too obscure as well; their solving was generally through trial and error.

Unusually, the game was still fun to play — in a load-it-up-for-a-quick-bash kind of way. These days, I doubt its hypothetical reception would be too hot; it was fun at the time, but ultimately outdated by recent efforts — *Sleepwalker* being a classic example.

● The gun and its owner, supposedly the stars of The Vindicator. Advertising, eh? Isn't it clever...

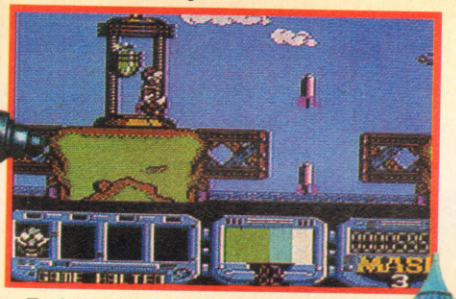
A-maze-ing sequel?

Boredom. It's a word I usually associate, where computer software is concerned, with maze games. *The Vindicator* — supposedly a follow-up to *Green Beret* — had a large first level that was... no prizes... a maze game. The tedium was phenomenal. What's more, once you'd finally gotten past it, the subsequent two levels proved to be insipid to say the least. In terms of basic looks and sounds, it provided a more-than-adequate amount of goodies. Sadly, playability took a back seat.

Combat School	**Ocean**	**91%**	**58%**	**1/10**
Joystick waggling? I can think of better ways to pass the time...				
Driller	**Incentive**	**96%**	**84%**	**6/10**
Innovative, but a little on the s-l-o-w side. Worth a look, though.				
Jack the Nipper 2	**Gremlin**	**72%**	**70%**	**1/10**
Nothing special, but an appealing romp nonetheless.				
Mask	**Gremlin**	**63%**	**56%**	**1/10**
Boring and dated — of little value to today's gamesplayer.				
Tetris	**Mirrorsoft**	**94%**	**94%**	**5/10**
An unusually simplistic but compulsive piece of software. Hurrah.				

E FEATURE

Gremlin also released another above-average (but ultimately forgettable) game around this time — the toy licence, *Mask*. Including the Hasbro characters in a plan-view arcade adventure/shoot-'em-up worked well; *Mask*'s graphics, gameplay and presentation were all of an adequately high standard. Unfortunately, it became all-too tiresome after extended play and, in essence, could be summed up with the classic line: 'Close, but no cigar'.



Tetris. It's a name that almost everyone's aware of these days. Its conversion to the Game Boy and dozens of other computer formats (too numerous to mention) has almost guaranteed it 'classic' status. *Tetris* demonstrates (and pretty much proves) the theory that no amount of complexities or superficial extras can replace the all-important aspect of computer software — playability. Its C64 incarnation was (and still is) just as much fun as the others. I think that's all that needs to be said, really.

On the other hand...

From one extreme to another, *Trantor* was particularly disappointing. Early screenshots of large, well-defined sprites and the promise of fast-moving gameplay proved to be misleading; its final finished form was repetitive and uninspiring. *Trantor*'s only marginally impressive aspect was the hero's flamethrower — this could be used to destroy the energy-draining, 'things' that floated aimlessly around the game's corridors.

● **The timer shows how long Trantor's got before he explodes. What joy! Hurry up!**

Of the four noteworthy soccer releases that graced the '64 in '88, *Match Day 2* was my least favourite. John Ritman and Bernie Drummond produced the Spectrum version; it was almost universally regarded as the best soccer game seen on the format. John Darnell engineered an almost perfect conversion to the '64. Unfortunately, the one thing he *couldn't* duplicate was arguably the most essential ingredient — the speed. Okay, so the tactics and clever plays were all still part of the game, but moving at such a slow pace, these lost (or so I felt) their previous charm.

Speaking of charm, **CRL**'s *Ninja Hamster* was practically devoid of any. Despite 'cutesy' graphics and a novel (read 'stupid') plot, it was still a laughably poor attempt at producing a different kind of beat-'em-up. It's great to see some originality — trace element or not — but *Ninja Hamster* was just plain dire.

Of the many arcade conversions that appeared throughout the year, *720°* was one of the most accomplished. The plot was, in-keeping with arcade traditions, almost obscenely shallow, and the basic aim of the game was to skate around — you've guessed it — Skate City, accumulating points and collecting cash. With cash, you could buy various add-ons for your character; from pads to help lessen the impact of falls, to better boards for better stunts, you could buy, abuse and use to your heart's content. Also (and more importantly) it could be used to gain entrance to one of the four skate parks on the outskirts of town. Unless you got to one of these within an allocated time limit, your sprite would be pursued by a vicious killer bees out for blood — oh, the realism. So with killer bees, skateboards, stunt parks and isometric 3D graphics (didn't I mention those?) you'd think *720°* would be a real blast to play, wouldn't you? Well, in the short term, yes. It's arcade parent strongly relied on its thumping, guitar-based music and superior graphics to pull in the crowds. The C64 version, lacking these, was the bare bones of the original concept, and suffered accordingly. **US Gold** *did* include an audio collection of the arcade's soundtrack, so if you where willing to pretend and had bad eyesight... oh, never mind.

THE LIST!

As before, we've compiled a list of every game featured, as well as the following information: Game name, producer, typical mark of the time, COMMODORE FORCE rating now and an estimation of how 'available' the game is. The aforementioned rating is on a scale of one to ten, with one to three being difficult to find, four to six being hmmmm... maybe, and seven to ten being readily available. Just to round it off nicely, there's a comment on each as well with extra information and opinions.

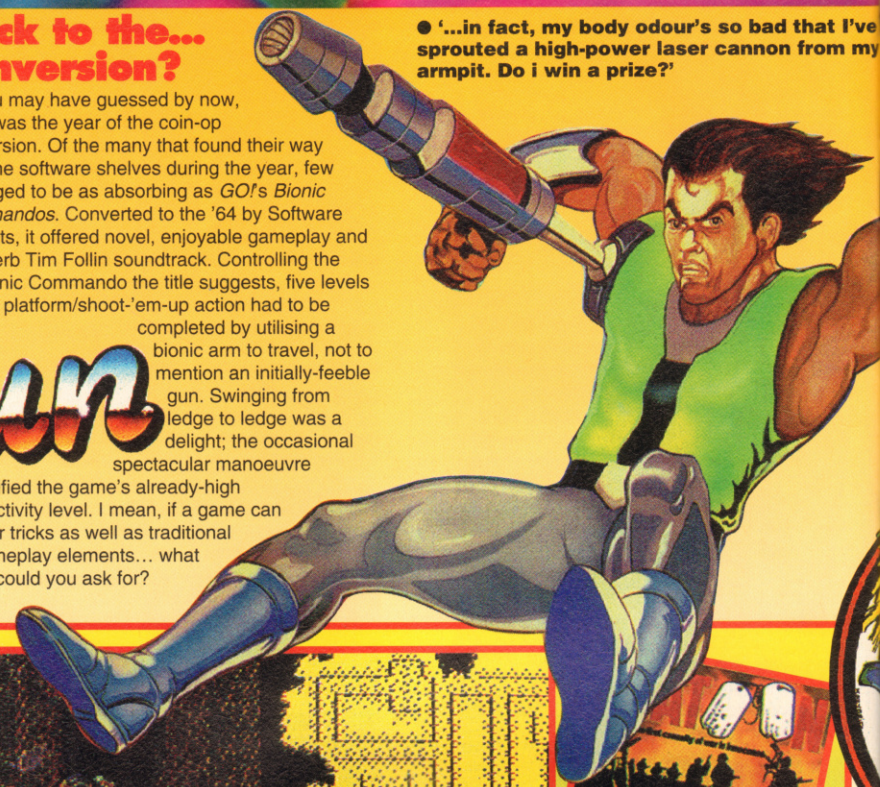
Trantor The flamethrower's okay, but the game? No chance!	GO!	55%	46%	1/10
Matchday 2 Fun, but tediously slow gameplay taints the action.	Ocean	90%	70%	1/10
Ninja Hamster Ugh! It's awful. But those were the days, eh?	CRL	39%	28%	1/10
720° Initially enjoyable, but ultimately repetitive.	US Gold	85%	72%	1/10
Outrun Lacking the charm of the coin-op. Could've been so much better...	US Gold	68%	49%	1/10

Another game that suffered equally during the transition from the bright lights of the amusement centres to the dingy back-rooms of the '64, was *Outrun*. The sheer amount of detail in the original (and its considerable popularity) meant that, even if the conversion was blinding, everyone would still not *quite* be satisfied. Well, at least cynics got a kick out of *Outrun*'s arrival — almost predictably, it was a pale shadow of the game '64 users had hoped for. Its two sequels (particularly the most recent one) more than made amends for this disappointment… but that's another story.

Back to the... conversion?

As you may have guessed by now, 1988 was the year of the coin-op conversion. Of the many that found their way onto the software shelves during the year, few managed to be as absorbing as *GO!*'s *Bionic Commandos*. Converted to the '64 by Software Projects, it offered novel, enjoyable gameplay and a superb Tim Follin soundtrack. Controlling the Bionic Commando the title suggests, five levels of platform/shoot-'em-up action had to be completed by utilising a bionic arm to travel, not to mention an initially-feeble gun. Swinging from ledge to ledge was a delight; the occasional spectacular manoeuvre intensified the game's already-high addictivity level. I mean, if a game can offer tricks as well as traditional gameplay elements… what more could you ask for?

● Looking far better than it played (or moved), Outrun was a bit dodgy. Sad.



● '...in fact, my body odour's so bad that I've sprouted a high-power laser cannon from my armpit. Do i win a prize?'

TARGET: RENEGADE

From the inhumanity of war to the supposed pleasure of breaking someone's nose (or any other bodily part you care to mention), **Imagine**'s *Target Renegade* was a thoroughly violent affair. A follow-up (of sorts) to their *Renegade* coin-op licence, *Target* was generally accepted as an improvement over its predecessor. Its violent content was almost eye-watering in its intensity; from kneeing (or being kneed) in the groin, to being smashed around the head with a baseball bat… it's a wonder a 15 rating wasn't slapped on it subsequent to its release! However, I still don't feel that any beat-'em-up can match Archer Mclean's superlative *IK+*; *Target Renegade*, although excellent, certainly didn't beat the aforementioned classic in terms of sheer playability.

Oscar performance

Despite the slightly dubious licence (I mean, converting a film about the horror of war into a computer game?) **Ocean**'s *Platoon* was one of the year's top ten releases. Comprised of a series of playable sub-games, it put most other movie tie-ins to shame. If I had to criticise anything, it would have been its multiload — but, with its sheer amount of polish and undeniable playability, *Platoon* provided hours upon hours of entertainment to many, including myself…

Platoon — Fantastic multi-part fun. Unmissable.	Ocean	94%	94%	3/10
Target Renegade — Violent, but missing the two-player fun of its Spectrum counterpart.	Imagine	84%	80%	4/10
Bionic Commandos — Swingin' fun — but the music steals the show…	GO!	90%	86%	1/10
The Great Giana Sisters — Oh dear. What a shame…	GO!/Rainbow Arts	96%	80%	1/10
The Vindicator — Boring, repetitive — just short of unplayable.	Imagine	64%	52%	1/10

Well, with *Bionic Commandos* it would have to be better graphics — in my opinion, the game's only real downfall. Speaking of which, *The Great Giana Sisters*' problem was that it was a little too reminiscent of a well-known **Nintendo** game, featuring a certain plumber/video game character/movie star… you catch my drift? Not long after its release, it was recalled and scrapped after **Nintendo** triumphed in a legal battle to prevent it being sold. As a result of that, you'd be lucky to find a copy… they're nigh-on impossible to find.

● They were banned from our C64s after someone realised their game ripped off Nintendo's Mario games. And boy are they ugly! Uggh.

● Here they are in their very own game. Recognise it? Thought so...

Football games made a re-appearance in the later half of the year to coincide with the beginning of the new soccer season. On the management side, *Tracksuit Manager* from **Goliath** was by far the best; its depth and options helped it to easily surpass previous efforts in its (playing?) field. Where arcade representations were concerned, *Emlyn Hughes International Soccer* walked away with the best pots.

As you'll well know if you're a regular COMMODORE FORCE reader, *Emlyn* wasn't too well received in its re-release review by Miles and, more so, Chris. After seeing this, fans of the game inundated our offices with complaining mail; one reader went as far as to describe Chris as a 'baby-faced piece of ****' for 'awarding' it 46%. Well, to solve the argument once and for all, here's the entire team's opinion…

MILES: I stand by my original opinion. It's too slow to generate any *real* excitement, and the keepers are awful.

CHRIS: Not for me, thank you.

IAN: It's a good game. I think it's alright.

Me? I like it, although I'm inclined to agree with Miles — the keepers *are* useless, and the pace rather pedestrian. Perhaps the final rating (58%) was on the low side, though; it was also a far cry from its original 90% and Sizzler accolade. Perhaps a mark between the two would've been a little more appropriate. Oh well — each to their own opinions, eh?

Piggy Mayhem

Imagine a game where the action is restricted to a single screen. Add lots of different-coloured pigs. Then include a fair amount of bombs, complete with timers. Sprinkle a few power-ups, amazing Tim Follin soundtrack, two player option and what do you get? *Psycho Pigs UXB* was a conversion of a little-known coin-op, better known for its slightly risqué advertisements. Picture the scene: two teenage males looking at a billboard where a scantly-dressed female clutched a copy of *Psycho Pigs UXB*. One of the lads remarked: 'I know which one I'd rather play with', to which his companion replied: 'Yes, but have you seen the reviews for *Psycho Pigs UXB*?'. Sexism and computer games debate aside, *Pigs* was a fun game to play — in two-player mode. On your own, it was sadly lacking; although it must be said that, as a conversion, it was just about as good as anyone could have hoped for.

On the budget scene, 1988 didn't really provide anything astoundingly brilliant. Re-releases were beginning to wriggle their way onto the software shelves; I wonder how many C64 users of the time could have imagined how thick on the ground they'd become in subsequent years. That aside, one budget release *was* of interest — *Dizzy*'s eponymous debut appearance. By far the lesser of the eggy one's escapades, it was a poor Spectrum port. But hey — there's nothing wrong with being a little nostalgic about it, is there?

Back to the Feature takes a short break next month, so to read about the ups and downs of 1989's software happenings, you'll have to wait until Issue 12. That said, don't worry — there'll be more than enough to compensate for its absence. Check out the Next Month page for more details — but for now, it's goodbye...

Psycho Pigs UXB — If you've got loads of friends, it's cool. Otherwise, avoid.	60%	70%	1/10
Tracksuit Manager — The best footy management game on the '64.	Goliath Games	89%	89%	4/10
Emlyn Hughes Int Soccer — Our final say on the matter is 75%. Feel free to write and air your opinions.	Audiogenic	90%	75%	7/10
Dizzy — The first. The worst. But hey — it was worth a mention…	Codemasters	48%	43%	2/10

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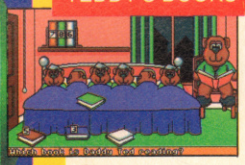

Select the correct number of Teddy's bedtime book.

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SURVEYING THE SCENE:

THE SEQUEL!

'But I filled one in from Issue Five' we hear you cry. Nevertheless, we're always interested to see how the C64, its users and the market in general are faring. To produce a magazine for people, it's often handy to know what they want to see (or don't). Oh, and there's the new-found COMMODORE FORCE tradition of a 'mystery prize' for certain lucky individuals whose surveys get pulled out of the hat first...

A: GETTING YOUR COPY OF COMMODORE FORCE

Tell us how you came to be filling out this questionnaire

(1) How did you first hear about COMMODORE FORCE?

- ☐ Saw it advertised in another magazine
- ☐ Saw it in newsagents
- ☐ Friend told me about it
- ☐ Some other way (please write in)

_____

(2) How often do you buy COMMODORE FORCE?

- ☐ Every issue
- ☐ Every other issue
- ☐ Less often
- ☐ Never

(3) How likely will you be to buy the next issue of COMMODORE FORCE?

- ☐ Very likely
- ☐ Quite likely
- ☐ Not very likely
- ☐ No chance

(3) How did you get this copy of COMMODORE FORCE?

- ☐ I have it on subscription
- ☐ It was delivered to my house by the local newsagent
- ☐ The newsagent keeps it for me behind the counter
- ☐ I saw it in a shop and bought it on impulse
- ☐ I went into the newsagent specifically to buy it
- ☐ I didn't buy it – it was given to me
- ☐ Some other way (please specify)

_____

(5) What do you do with any back issues of COMMODORE FORCE you have?

- ☐ Chuck them out
- ☐ Keep them in case I need them for info later
- ☐ Loan them to a mate to read
- ☐ Other (please specify)

_____

B: WHAT DO YOU THINK OF COMMODORE FORCE?

(6) Overall, how much would you say you like COMMODORE FORCE?

- ☐ Like it loads
- ☐ It's OK I suppose!
- ☐ Don't like it much
- ☐ It stinks!
- ☐ I've never really given it much thought!

(7) What do you like best in COMMODORE FORCE? (please write in)

_____

_____

_____

(8) What do you hate most about COMMODORE FORCE? (please write in)

_____

_____

_____

(9) Have a look at this issue's cover. Do you:

- ☐ Like it a lot
- ☐ Quite like it
- ☐ Don't like it much
- ☐ Hate it!

I reckon we need more tips. Lots of 'em! Ha, yeah!

(11) **Below we have listed the sort of things you are likely to find in COMMODORE FORCE every month. We want to know if you think we've got the right level of coverage — so tick the box closest to your opinion...**

	Too Much	About Right	Too Little	Don't Know
■ News (What's Happening?)	☐	☐	☐	☐
■ Tape pages (Reel Action)	☐	☐	☐	☐
■ Full price software reviews	☐	☐	☐	☐
■ Round-ups	☐	☐	☐	☐
■ Competitions	☐	☐	☐	☐
■ Tips (The Tipster)	☐	☐	☐	☐
■ Technical stuff (The Mighty Brian)	☐	☐	☐	☐
■ Posters	☐	☐	☐	☐
■ Work in Progress section	☐	☐	☐	☐
■ Letters (Mangram's Mail Bag)	☐	☐	☐	☐
■ Subscription offers	☐	☐	☐	☐
■ Charts	☐	☐	☐	☐
■ Features	☐	☐	☐	☐
■ Compilation reviews	☐	☐	☐	☐
■ Public Domain (Public Sector)	☐	☐	☐	☐
■ Adventures (Bash Yer Brains)	☐	☐	☐	☐
■ Mail Order (Forcefield Plaza)	☐	☐	☐	☐
■ Next Month	☐	☐	☐	☐

(15) **If you have seen/bought any of the games reviewed in COMMODORE FORCE, how does our review compare with your opinion of the game?**
- ☐ COMMODORE FORCE got it spot on
- ☐ COMMODORE FORCE gave me the impression it was better than it is
- ☐ COMMODORE FORCE didn't like it as much as I do!
- ☐ I haven't bought/seen any games reviewed in COMMODORE FORCE

(16) **Who do you trust most when reading reviews and comments?**
- ☐ Miles Guttery
- ☐ James Price
- ☐ Chris Hayward
- ☐ Milo Jackson

(17) **[a] If COMMODORE FORCE is not your favourite COMMODORE magazine tell us which one is... (write in)**

_____

[b] Why is it better than COMMODORE FORCE?

_____

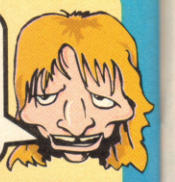
(18) **Who is your favourite writer on COMMODORE FORCE?**
- ☐ Lloyd Mangram
- ☐ James Price
- ☐ Chris Hayward
- ☐ Miles Guttery
- ☐ Dr Brian Strain

(19) **We get letters all the time from readers suggesting that we put more tapes on, or add more pages. Some people even want both! Now, which would YOU prefer?**
- ☐ Keep the magazine as it is
- ☐ Add an extra tape and charge me £3.50
- ☐ Go up to a whacking 84 pages (with 2 tapes) and charge me £3.50
- ☐ Cut one of the tapes and come down in price to £2.75
- ☐ Cut one of the tapes, go up in pages and stay the same price (£2.99)

(20) **Some readers have written in to say that COMMODORE FORCE should be more like ZZAP! 64 was. What do you think?**
- ☐ I think COMMODORE FORCE is best as it is
- ☐ I would like to see COMMODORE FORCE go a bit more like ZZAP! 64
- ☐ Sorry, I don't even remember ZZAP! 64!

There's an old saying: 'he who fills in a survey form, gets his message across'. So, to get *your* opinions — such as hatred of made-up sayings used in outros, perhaps? — known, simply mail this page to: COMMODORE FORCE SURVEY (2), IMPACT MAGAZINES, FREEPOST, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1BR

Tell us your secrets! C'mon, you know you can trust us...



C: ABOUT YOU

(21) **Sex: (do not reply 'Yes please')**
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

(22) **Age (please write in)**

_____

(23) **How long have you had your C64?**

_____ months _____ years

(24) **Do you have a disk drive?**
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

(25) **Do you plan to upgrade to another computer or console in the next year?**
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If YES, which one? _____ **(write in)**

THE TAPES

What games do YOU want on Reel Action? Write five suggestions in the space below, and who knows? If there's a demand for particular games, we'll do our utmost to bring them to you...

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So you get to read about *our* fave games all the time, but what about your own? We'd be particularly interested to see your all-time top ten C64 games. We'll then collate the information and give the definitive reader's top 100 games in a future issue.

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BASH YE BRAIN

What a strange month. I'd just finishing beating up my local librarian for suggesting I didn't wee in their book racks, when — all of a sudden — aliens appeared in the peripheral of my vision, just in front of the Mills and Boon books (soggy, may I add). Sword at the ready, I leaped into a defensive position, much to the amusement of several passers by. Puzzled, I looked a little closely and saw it was, in fact — Chris Hayward! After a brief conversion, it turned out he was trying to find a dictionary definition of 'stupid Neanderthal idiot with girlie taste in loincloths'. What could he have needed that for, I wonder?

Nevertheless, it's a bumper round-up this issue — adventure fanzines being the topic. If only they printed more pictures...

ADVENTURE FANZINE ROUND-UP

Some adventurers are fortunate in having like-minded adventuring friends they can call on for help when they're stuck trying to solve a particular puzzle or problem. However, it's extremely frustrating for the not-so-fortunate adventurers who don't. You know the feeling — you're enthusiastically spouting off about the great game you're playing and the problems you're trying to solve, when suddenly you notice that your patient listener's eyes have glazed over and that they seem to have become temporarily brain-dead. They just can't wait to change the subject or, even worse, can't wait to get away. Now it's a fact that the experienced adventure player who has a huge bundle of solved adventures under their belt always seem to have tons of adventuring friends that they can call on for help. Sadly, there's a flip side to this sorry coin. Time and again I receive letters from poor lost souls telling me that they don't know how to go about finding other adventurers to share their sorrows or joys with. The best way to start making contact with fellow adventurers is to subscribe to an adventuring fanzine. These are usually run by enthusiasts and all newcomers are warmly welcomed into the fold. There are a number of adventure fanzines which are published at regular intervals — perhaps now might be a good time to tell you something about them...

ADVENTURE PROBE

● Monthly Publication — £2 per issue

Adventure Probe is the grand-daddy of all specialist adventure magazines. It was first published way back in June 1986 and has been running continually ever since. One difference about Adventure Probe is that it seems to always have female editors — the first being Sandra Sharkey, who handed over the editorship to Mandy Rodrigues in 1988. She in turn handed over the difference to Barbara Gibb in June 1992. This has always been, in my opinion, the friendliest magazine. It caters for both 8- and 16-bit adventurers and even covers a spot of RPG from time to time. It includes many reviews of Commodore 64 adventures every month, and generally there's rather more 8-bit material than 16-bit. Adventure Probe — or 'Probe' as it's fondly referred to — has plenty of reviews, hints and tips, a very 'Letters' section as well as plenty of interesting adventure-related articles. There's a very useful 'In-Touch' section where readers can sell or exchange adventures they've completed and where you can pick up almost any of the 'golden oldies' you've sought after but to no avail. The emphasis in Probe is to give help rather than full solutions, so the only solutions you're likely to find are the occasional 'Serialised Solution' for one of the older games. This way, your enjoyment of a new adventure isn't spoilt.

There's an extensive archive of adventure solutions available, which can be bought at a nominal cost to cover photocopying expenses. Also, there are regular lists of 'Objects and their Uses' for various games which helps a great deal.

BASH'S M

● **Donald McLeod** of **Huddersfield** writes that he is having terrible trouble with *Lords of Time* — one of my all-time favourite adventures. The strange thing is — and he's getting dreadfully confused about this — is that when he was trying to get to grips with the caveman outside the cave on the prehistoric level he, in desperation, said GIVE TOOTH and to his amazement, the Tooth fairy appeared, took the tooth and walked off with the Cavemen at the same time! Well, Donald, this is a bug that may look convenient but isn't at all — if the Cavemen are despatched in that manner, you can't complete the level or go North through the cave system. What you should do is go back to level one, when you get the tooth from the Sabre

There's a regular 'Getting You Started' section, where the first moves in newer adventures are listed just to get you into the swing of things. Perhaps most useful of all is the extensive telephone helpline, with fellow enthusiasts eagerly awaiting calls for help on adventures that they have completed — and for those without a telephone (or a large phone bill) there's a postal helpline with lists published and updated regularly on the adventures they can offer help on. Adventure Probe is one of the most useful grimoires that an enthusiastic adventurer can have at hand.

90%

THE ADVENTURE AND STRATEGY CLUB

● Bi-Monthly Publication — £24 per year

This publication is run on a professional basis and was born from the ashes of the old Adventurers Club Ltd — it's also very capably edited by Sue Roseblade with the help of two partners. It's differs from other fanzines in that you get a binder at the start and, at bi-monthly intervals, you receive the pages for the various sections with reviews, solutions, hints and tips, articles and the like to add to the various sections in your binder. Eventually you have your own personal archive to refer to when needed. There are letters and — surprise surprise — a telephone helpline service.

As it's name suggests, there's wide coverage of adventure and strategy type games for both 8- and 16-bit computers. The tone of the club is friendly but also business-like. There's a huge archive of game help available, and the club offers the opportunity to purchase software at a reduced rate. This is well worth checking out for dedicated games players who want that little bit more than just adventure coverage.

87%

THE GOBLIN GAZZETTE

● Bi-Monthly Publication — £1.50 per issue

The Goblin Gazzette is dedicated entirely to 8-bit adventurers, and in many ways is similar to Adventure Probe. It's a fairly new fanzine in it's present format, but its editor — Les Mitchell — has been publishing it for quite some time. Originally entitled Bare Bones, it used to be a solutions-only fanzine, but now offers a wide variety of reviews, hints and tips, lively letters section, features, articles and news. The fanzine can also be used as a useful reference guide. Here again we find a very extensive telephone helpline section and Les himself is always happy to help out and chat if you give him a ring. Here again, as with Probe, the enthusiasm and friendliness of fellow readers is noteworthy. As a bi-monthly publication you may find that the long period between issues a bit frustrating. You never know, though — if Les gets plenty of new subscribers and more contributions from fellow readers, then it might just change into a monthly. I've been very impressed with the issues that I've seen and Les informs me that there'll be plenty more Commodore 64 contributions in forthcoming issues.

85%

RED HERRING

● Bi-Monthly Publication — £4 per issue

It has to be said that this is the most polished fanzine that I've seen. The print is professionally produced and spring-binding is used. The cost is a little higher than others, but the quality is excellent and every subscriber I know is impressed with the value they get for their money. Red Herring is dedicated to both 8- and 16-bit enthusiasts and contains plenty of the usual sections. As with Adventure Probe, it's run by lady editors — this time jointly by Marion Taylor and Sue Medley. Sue is also the editor of the long-running disk-based adventure magazine, Syntax, dedicated to 16-bit adventurers. She's also the author of a number of extremely successful adventure games, so, as with all the editors mentioned, she knows a great deal about all aspects of adventuring — what more could you ask for?

89%

ADVENTURE CODER

● Periodic Publication — £1.50 per issue

This fanzine, in contrast to the others I've mentioned, is dedicated not so much to the adventure player but to the budding adventure writer. Run by Chris Hestor, it's devoted entirely to 8-bit adventure authors and gives extensive help, hints and tips with programming problems encountered while using adventure writing utilities such as GAC, PAW, QUILL, ADLAN — even basic and machine code writers are catered for. The reason Adventure Coder's a periodic publication is down to Chris being a bit of a perfectionist. He checks and re-checks his material to ensure everything is just right before he plunges ahead with the publication of each issue. This does pay off — when you're copying routines, they have to be double-checked so no frustrating typing errors crop up, resulting with annoying errors in your programming. Now that GAC is available through PD libraries, anyone seriously attempting to write their first adventure game really needs the extensive help that Adventure Coder offers. Back issues are available — a boon to the novice who wants to get right down to basics. This publication is the only one of its kind that I know of dedicated to adventure authors — other than Adventure Workshop, its sister magazine for 16-bits.

87%

MAILBAG

Tiger, and find the mushroom ring in the garden — you pass it on your way back to the clock. Once there, try to pick up the coin you find, and it will be slapped out of your hand by an invisible creature. When you're in the mushroom ring you can see that it is the Tooth Fairy and she will make you an offer for the tooth. Try SHOW TOOTH TO TOOTH FAIRY on some versions. Don't make the mistake of accepting her first offer though as you only get the coin and miss a vital item that you need. If you refuse her offer she will throw in a Firefly, which will enable you to ignore the candle and you have a permanent source of light. To tackle the Cavemen you must first sort out the Tyrannosaurus Rex and the Allasaurus. The clue here is that they follow each other and don't get on very well together. Then you can obtain the mirror from the pit. It's a magic mirror and will absorb a certain nasty creature. If broken at the right moment, the creature will chase away your problems at the cave.

● **Mrs Sue Williamson** of **Dublin** writes that she is at her wits end trying to move the huge fallen Menhir in *Zork II*. Well, Sue, the only way that the Menhir can be moved is by magic, and the only way you can use magic is to obtain the wand from the wizard. Once you've done this you can have lots of fun around the place trying out the F words — no, I'm not suggesting that you swear or anything like that. Remember that throughout the game the pesky wiz kept appearing and casting spells at you such as FUMBLE when you dropped all your objects and FEEBLE when you suddenly couldn't move because you were so weak? Put this to good use with the word FLOAT and your troubles will just drift away, but do remember that the spells have a limited life — so move quickly!

It seems to be one of those months when almost everyone is playing golden oldies as I also had a letter from **Wayne Jones** of **Pontypool** who tells me he's having dreadful problems with transport in *ZZZZ*. He just can't figure out how to get on the bus. Well, what you have to do first is EXAMINE BOOKCASE to find the money for the fare. Next you should CLIMB DOWN WELL and deal with the fire under the trapdoor. When you EXAMINE ASHES you will find the Bus stop sign. STEP OVER THE CROCODILE to get to the busy main road. RAISE SIGN to attract the attention of the bus but don't forget to STOP BUS for one of them to actually stop for you!

● Well, that's all for this month. Keep on blazing away at those tricky adventures and, who knows, you might even get somewhere. Failing that, write to me for assistance at: Bash yer Brains, COMMODORE FORCE, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW.

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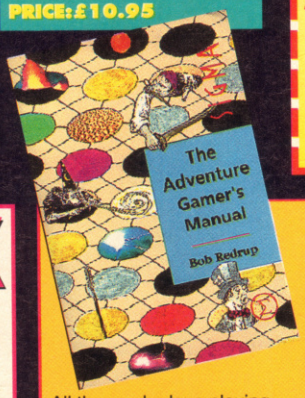

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The cover you see before you is the very first issue of ZZAP! 64. One hundred issues later and it's still going strong. Sure, it's now called COMMODORE FORCE — incorporating ZZAP! 64, but at the end of the day, what's in a name?

Nothing. It's the quality that counts, and ZZAP! in either of its two guises has always provided more than enough. Exclusive reviews, cassettes containing high-rated games, informative and entertaining features... the list goes on. Admittedly, the sheer quantity of reviewable software seen during the early days isn't something we have in these, the times of the 16/32-bit computer and console, but we get by.

Back in the late eighties, there was always a debate on 'quantity vs quality'. Essentially, the argument was that a worryingly high percentage of games released were — to be brutally honest — crap. Most software houses would release seemingly endless amounts of insipid releases, occasionally adding a fiery chapter to this sorry tale by releasing a real classic. This, many said, was the problem. Why not cut the rubbish? If more time was spent on a select few projects, the general standard would be higher and all concerned would be happy. The buying public, it seemed, felt that reduction of releases in favour of more development would be the correct way for the C64 software industry to go.

These days, there really are few releases. However, when they're looking to be as good as Mayhem in Monsterland, Alien 3 or Lemmings, what more could you ask for? All three look set to join the ranks of the 'true classic', and — rest assured — if you want the complete low-down, you know you'll find it in COMMODORE FORCE. Ahhh, we may be a hundred issues old, but we're not crusty yet... and never will be. Amen.

Oh, before we forget — next issue isn't our November issue. It's Autumn '93 — a 'special', if you like. As well as our regulars, we'll also be including our all-time top 100 games. An in-depth feature detailing all that's ever — in our opinion — been hot on the '64, it'll be THE definitive collection of reviews and ratings.

We've also got some classics lined up for Reel Action, but hey — you'll have to wait until next month to find out about those.

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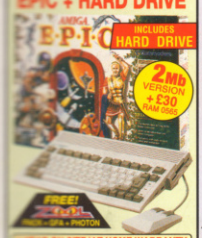

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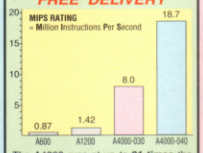

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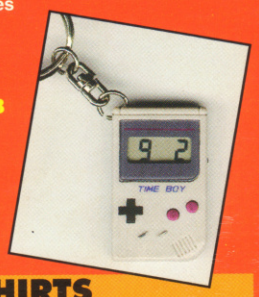

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